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People's Control in Socialist Society



PROGRESS PUBLISHERS
MOSCOW

Translated from the Russian
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НАРОДНЫЙ КОНТРОЛЬ
В СОЦИАЛИСТИЧЕСКОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ

На английском языке

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First printing 1973

Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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CHAPTER 1

THE NATURE OF SOCIALIST CONTROL

The role of the masses in the development of society is one of the principal questions of Marxist-Leninist theory.

Marx, Engels and Lenin asserted that it is the masses, in particular those classes and sections of society which are the driving force in social production (i.e. the working people), that constitute the basis of society and its main progressive force.

This thesis has tremendous importance since it encourages the working people to develop self-consciousness and an understanding of their role in the historic progress of human society.

The victory of a socialist revolution brings the economic exploitation and political oppression of working people to an end and it affords them an opportunity to take a direct and active part in all spheres of public and state life. Only socialism ensures the sovereignty of the people. Instead of being an apparatus of oppression confronting the working people, the state becomes an instrument of their class will, the efficiency of which depends on the degree of the participation of the masses in the management of state affairs.

Only the victorious socialist revolution, which hands over political power to the working people and abolishes the private ownership of the means of production, can usher in the social and economic conditions of true democracy. Under such a democracy, Lenin said, "the *mass* of the population will rise to taking an *independent* part, not only in voting

and elections, *but also in the everyday administration of the state*".¹

The practical experience of the USSR and the other socialist countries shows that the building of socialism is possible only when the conscious and creative initiative of workers, peasants and all working people is utilised to the full.

A socialist system brings forward numerous ways of drawing working people into the management of social affairs.

In the USSR the most important place in the system of institutions of socialist democracy belongs to the *Soviets of Working People's Deputies*, i.e., to those organs of power that are elected by the people, responsible to the people and consist of the best representatives of the people. The Soviets are based on the combination of state and public principles.

More than two million people have been elected deputies to the various levels of Soviets. These representatives of the working class, the collective farmers and the Soviet intelligentsia take their turn in serving the people. The composition of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of the eighth convocation, the deputies to which were elected in June 1970 illustrates the genuinely democratic nature of the Soviets. This country's supreme organ of power included then 481 workers (or 31.7 per cent of the total number of deputies), and 282 collective farmers (18.6 per cent); some 27.7 per cent of the deputies were non-Party people, and 30.5 per cent, women.

The activity of the Soviets reflects most fully the truly socialist and democratic nature of the Soviet state.

The trade unions, the Young Communist League (Komsomol), the co-operatives and the other *mass organisations of the working people* in town and country are also playing an emphatic role in the development and improvement of socialist democracy and in encouraging the people to participate in the management of public affairs.

The Report of the CC CPSU to the Party's 24th Congress (1971) contained the following statement: "we see the meaning and content of socialist democracy in the increasingly broader participation of the masses in the administration of state and social affairs.... The Party's constant concern is

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 487-88.

that our socialist democracy should steadily develop and that every person should feel he is a citizen in the full sense of the word, a citizen interested in the cause of the entire nation and bearing his share of the responsibility."¹

The *people's control* organs play an important role in educating the people to see themselves as the complete masters of their land and as the conscious architects of their own fate.

According to Lenin, the chief purpose of control under socialism is to give the broad masses the right to check and manage all state affairs. Accordingly, when elaborating the theoretical and practical problems of building socialism and communism, he emphasised the importance of the correct organisation of state and public control. Lenin wrote:

"Accounting and control, if carried on by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies as the supreme state power, or on the instructions, on the authority, of *this* power—widespread, general, universal accounting and control, the accounting and control of the amount of labour performed and of the distribution of products—is the *essence* of socialist transformation, once the political rule of the proletariat has been established and secured."²

Control is a social function, its character dependent upon the nature of production and the distribution of products. Therefore, one must proceed from a social analysis, making clear the interests of which class control is upholding. On the eve of the October Revolution Lenin wrote that "the whole question of control boils down to who controls whom, i.e., which class is in control and which is being controlled".³

Under the bourgeois system, control, whichever form it takes, always upholds the interests of the ruling class. In spite of all assertions to the contrary by the apologists of capitalism, there can be no talk of independent or unbiased control in capitalist countries.

In his book *Social Control of Business*⁴ the prominent

¹ Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Moscow, 1971, p. 136.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 410.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 25, p. 342.

⁴ J. M. Clark, *Social Control of Business*, Chicago, 1926, 2nd edition; New York, 1939, p. 149.

American economist J. M. Clark advocates control over the monopolies to prevent conflict between them and reduce economic catastrophe. He claims that the problem should be solved on a voluntary basis, realising perfectly well that any other form of control over profits would be intolerable to the capitalists. According to J. M. Clark, control should be introduced cautiously, taking into account the specific demands of the situation.

The *Executive Leadership Course*,¹ which was published in the United States in 1967, claims that inspection officials should be guided by the interests of the companies. This is a cynical admission of the actual nature of control under capitalism.

In capitalist society the organs of administration are subservient to the powers that be; their purpose is to enrich the ruling class, and oppress and exploit the working people. The principal task of inspection is in such circumstances to safeguard the rights and interests of millionaires and of other wealthy people.

The parliaments or heads of state of capitalist countries usually appoint the chief executives of the central inspection organs either for a lengthy term of office or for life. These officials can be recalled only by parliament, and even then, only if they have committed a crime.

The chiefs of state inspection agencies are given high salaries on the pretext that their independence of the government is thus ensured. In many countries the chief executives of the central inspection agencies (general inspectors, chairmen of inspection committees) enjoy higher salaries than government ministers. The other officials serving in the control organs also receive higher pay than their counterparts in the ministries. The bourgeois rulers lavishly spend the people's money on maintaining inspection organs.

In an attempt to prove that the state inspection agencies are independent of the government, these expenses are entered in the budget as items that do not require annual approval from parliament. To put it briefly, the bourgeoisie grants all possible rights and privileges to the watchdogs of its money bags.

¹ *Executive Leadership Course*, Prentice-Hall, New York.

A state inspector's post is not threatened by the frequent government crises and he is thus able to serve loyally the real rulers of the imperialist states. In this respect he is irremovable and independent.

State inspection portrayed as a "non-partisan", "unbiased" agency is actually nothing but a compromise between various parties. In its long struggle against the working class and the revolutionary movement, the bourgeoisie has realised that in the face of the general crisis of the capitalist system the inter-party co-ordination of efforts is the best means of serving the interests of the ruling groups and parties. Hence, the inspection agencies are called upon to safeguard the common interests of the ruling parties. The inspection agency is an instrument of "general use" in the political machine of the capitalist state for upholding the fundamental class interests of the bourgeoisie as a whole, irrespective of party affiliations.

A typical feature of state inspection in the capitalist countries is the continual staff increase. In Britain, for example, there were 113 inspectors in 1866; 206, in 1913; and 380, in 1948. Today the control and inspection department employs nearly 600 people. The control department of the United States employs 5,000 people.

The class nature of state inspection in the capitalist countries is illustrated by its subservience to the financial oligarchy. The capitalists cannot give the working people access to control since this would undermine the very foundation of the system of exploitation and oppression.

The ideologists of imperialism make all sorts of ingenious attempts to prove that there is perfect harmony in modern capitalist society; that there is a community of interests uniting all layers of the population, including the financial sharks and the working people; that everyone has the right to control the state and the monopolies and that the workers have a share in the profits made by the enterprises. There is hardly any need to prove that all such claims are false. The working people are debarred from exercising control.

Control in a socialist society takes on a very different form. It serves the interests of the working people and of the entire nation.

Lenin regarded accounting and control as one of the basic

points in the struggle of the proletariat for power, and for the victory of socialism and communism, and as the essential prerequisite for the foundation and correct functioning of the new society.

As a result of the Great October Socialist Revolution the working people themselves were given for the first time in history the right of control. When the reins of government were taken over by workers and peasants, control became a powerful instrument for suppressing the resistance of the deposed classes and an important tool of economic and cultural development.

The necessity of control under socialism stems from the very nature of the new system based on the public ownership of the means of production. Socialism means labour free from capitalists and exploitation; it means rigid state and public control over the production and consumption.

The planned development of productive forces and of the relations of production is an objective necessity, and is the economic law of socialism. Under socialism, control as a social function is, therefore, closely related to the law of planned and balanced economic development.

The economic policy of a socialist state is the combination of a number of measures, based on a conscious employment of the economic laws of socialism and aimed at the solution of economic, political and cultural problems. This economic policy is elaborated by the Communist Party and embodied in the economic plans. However, without accounting and control, the plans, however sound they might be from the scientific viewpoint, are doomed to failure. The Programme of the CPSU states that "firm and consistent discipline, day-to-day control, and determined elimination of elements of parochialism and of a narrow departmental approach in economic affairs are necessary conditions for successful communist construction".¹

The Communist Party regards control as the most important instrument of economic management, and as an effectual means of developing and improving the socialist relations of production. Control helps to utilise more fully the advantages

¹ *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1961, p. 534.

that socialist democracy gives and the creative initiative of the people.

Control is not an emergency measure, it is a function of the scientific management of state and public affairs. It is an integral part of administration.

Control involves work on the implementation of decisions, bringing to light the problems that arise as these assignments are being carried out and calls for measures to overcome the difficulties. Control plays a large part in raising the citizen's sense of responsibility before society and teaches him discipline, honesty and patriotism.

Mass control consolidates the unity between the socialist state and the working people. It ensures the efficiency of that administrative machinery which organises the work of people in the different fields of production and distribution.

Control is one of the channels supplying objective information about society. It helps to appraise accurately the work of society's economic and political organisations and the precision with which laws and social norms are observed.

Elaborating the scientific principles of administration to be followed by the world's first state of workers and peasants, Lenin emphasised the paramount importance of control in the solution of such problems as the regulation of labour and consumption, the enforcement of order and self-discipline by making sure that all officials and citizens strictly observe the socialist law and the schooling of the broad masses in administrative techniques.

Control and accounting play a great part in creating new attitudes towards labour and social property and in the struggle against idleness, loafing, bribery, knavery, and hooliganism. "In order to render these parasites harmless to socialist society we must organise the accounting and control of the amount of work done and of production and distribution by the entire people, by millions and millions of workers and peasants, participating voluntarily, energetically and with revolutionary enthusiasm."¹

Control is essential if law and order are to be maintained. In a socialist society control is to be perfected by the organisation and high sense of duty of the working people, and

¹ V. I. Lenin. *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 411-12.

this is why the development in every conceivable way of discipline, self-discipline, organisation, order and efficiency is constantly called for.

The rules of human conduct codified in laws that reflect the will of the whole people form the core of the discipline and order of social life. The laws and the other legislative acts play a powerful role in economic, social and cultural development; they create the conditions for the harmonious and all-round development of the individual. Socialist legislation forms the legal basis of public discipline, and thus the control over its correct enforcement is a question of paramount importance.

The improvement of economic management and planning is indispensable if the material and technical basis of communism is to be realised and greater labour productivity and the expansion of production on the basis of the latest scientific and technological advances to be achieved. In this situation the problem of the rational utilisation of resources (material, natural, labour and financial) and of capital investments, the reduction of production costs and the elimination of losses, take on an exceptional importance. The institution of people's control has been called upon by the 24th Congress of the CPSU to help solve these problems.

Through their involvement in the process of checking the way the state organisations and officials execute the decisions of the CPSU and the Soviet Government, the working people come to understand these resolutions and actively help implement them; they begin to demand more of themselves.

Participation in controlling the different aspects of the work of the state machinery, the administrations of industrial enterprises, institutions and organisations is one of the ways of developing the conscious self-discipline which, as the Programme of the CPSU emphasises, leads to the consolidation and development of the basic rules of communist society.

In a socialist community control on account of the aims it sets itself and by the fact that it is exercised by the public is based on broad democratic principles. Lenin said that when accounting and control was placed in the hands of the working people, these activities would become in the true sense general, universal and nation-wide.

Once the exploiter classes had disappeared and socialism

won a final and complete victory, the Soviet state was transformed into the instrument of the whole society; it began to serve society's needs. The entire system of the various organs of power and administration has been so devised as to ensure the maximum realisation of the people's will and allow their participation in administration and control on genuinely democratic terms.

In the USSR control is exercised through the various state and public political organisations. No matter the organisation or sphere of public life under question, control is always exercised in a deeply democratic manner because it is in the hands of the working people themselves and is used in their own interests.

The interconnection of state and public control derives from the fact that all the organs of control pursue one and the same goal and all the forms of control are aimed at the successful solution of the problems involved in the building of communism. The different agencies entrusted with these functions are components of Soviet society's single administrative machinery directed by the Communist Party.

The methods of work employed by the state and public control organs have much in common, including above all their approach to explanation, persuasion and education.

Persuasion is the principal method employed by the Communist Party in its leadership of the people; it is the basic principle of every aspect of the internal life of the socialist community. This method presupposes the existence of a broad democracy in all public organisations. Only in such an atmosphere can people become convinced that the decisions they take are correct, set about working out ways of implementing the adopted decisions and produce arguments to convince those who are uncertain and explain to those who have not fully understood.

The method of persuasion requires an individual approach to people. It is essential to be able to win people and gain their confidence. That requires tact, delicacy, self-possession and patience.

To call an offender to order is a simple matter. It is far less easy to take the trouble to find out a person's weak and strong points; to understand where he fails because of ignorance or inability and where because of negligence or lack

of zeal. If the latter is the case the man has to be helped to realise his mistakes and understand what is required of him.

In his dealings with people Lenin took into account not only the constant aspects of a man's character, but also the temporary, transitory features. He took into account a man's mood and his physical condition; he sincerely sympathised with people in sorrow and always tried to help them. Lenin considered it his duty not only to reprimand the offender, but also to give him useful advice and warn against repetition of the fault in question.

Persuasion is not a preaching of abstract, copy-book morality; persuasion relies on facts and examples from real life. Nothing can be so effective and forceful as the voice of experience. So it takes a man with a broad outlook, who knows life and is capable of analysing and comparing facts, to make an efficient controller.

Lenin paid a great deal of attention to facts. Correct leadership is impossible without this kind of knowledge. He relied greatly on his personal observations; he mixed with the people and took note of all valid opinions expressed by people when they spoke in simple and relaxed phrases undisturbed by the presence of a great man.

In January 1922 Lenin travelled incognito by rail and found that transport was being altogether neglected. Later he wrote: "I found the trolleys in the worst possible state. . . . Riding incognito, I was fortunate to hear frank and truthful (and not false and bureaucratically sweet) remarks made by employees, and I inferred from their stories that it was not a chance occurrence, but that the entire organisation was utterly shameful; degradation and inefficiency were complete."

"This was the first time I went by rail not as a 'high official', who brings everybody to their feet by dozens of special cables, but as a stranger. . . ."¹

Lenin scrupulously investigated the local situation, but regarded those facts, which illustrated the economic position of the whole country, as material for profound political generalisations. It was in this manner that he came to the conclusion that the grain surplus appropriation system should

¹ *Lenin Miscellany XXXU*, pp. 315-16.

be replaced by a tax in kind and that the urban-rural trade turnover should be expanded.

The leader of the young Soviet state talked with delegations of peasants, took part in their conferences and congresses, and jotted down their requests and complaints. For example, on October 21, 1920 he made the following note:

"Peasants from Stavropol Gubernia (the ones who brought bread to children) complain that the co-operatives do not distribute

wheel-grease (the warehouse has it)

matches

and other goods.

Herrings were spoilt but not distributed.

Discontent is terrible. The Gubernia's Food Commissar tells the peasants that they will get everything only after the appropriation of surplus is completed."¹

Lenin believed that the art of administration and control is not an innate equality, but one that is developed by experience, self-improvement and persistent training. That was why he despised crude approach of the politician who relies on his position of authority and command.

If it was a matter of oversight or neglect, Lenin always asked the nature of the offence and the moral and political qualities of the offender. He never took a hasty decision when it was the case of an honest man having committed a mistake by accident.

Lenin was exacting but understanding. N. P. Gorhunov, the business-manager of the Council of People's Commissars, recalled that while keeping constant watch for carelessness or negligence, exposing wrong-doers, and condemning lax, slovenly and uncultured behaviour, Lenin did so in such a manner that even people whom he threatened with severe reprimands, including arrest, could not feel resentful.

Methods of persuasion and explanation, naturally, cannot be relied upon entirely without leading to an overindulgence. One cannot speak about villainy, Lenin said, without i.e. Wrong-doing and lawlessness cannot but rouse indignation.

Lenin successfully combined tact and consideration for people and their needs with an exacting and severe approach

¹ *Lenin Miscellany XXXU*, p. 159.

when this was necessary. He did not tolerate officials who failed to take steps against inefficiency, red-tape, bureaucracy, breach of trust, and violations of state discipline. He demanded that such people should be immediately released from office and deprived of Party membership.

Fidelity to principle is one of the salient features of Lenin's way of conducting public and political work. Never, under no circumstances did Lenin resort to unscrupulous, back-stage deals with his ideological and political opponents; he never went back on his principles and convictions.

His private relationships also showed Lenin to be a man of principle. In 1917, Lenin, already Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, replying to a letter from a French socialist C. Dumas, whom he had met earlier in Paris, wrote: "I very much regret that personal relations between us became impossible after such profound political differences divided us."¹

The Communist Party teaches all its members and all citizens to be as upright and exacting as Lenin was.

The 24th Congress of the CPSU emphasised that no one should take any position of authority or command for granted as his for life; the norms of socialist discipline and law apply to all. All organs of control should work to strengthen state discipline and law.

The principal forms of control in the USSR are as follows:

- a) state control;
- b) organs of people's control which includes elements of both state and public control;
- c) other forms of public control, excluding Party control: control by trade unions, Komsomol, co-operative and other public organisations, as well as the control exercised by the citizens themselves.

The system of control in the USSR is based on the Soviets of Working People's Deputies whose role in society is steadily acquiring greater importance. The Soviets, which exercise absolute authority, represent most vividly the control the people have over socialist production and over the administrative machinery. They have a tremendous influence on all aspects of state and public activities. The Soviets are the

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 44, p. 51.

media through which the broad masses of working people control the various spheres of political life and of economic and cultural development, and through which they take part in managing state affairs.

Lenin wrote: "The organisation of proper administration, the undeviating fulfilment of the decisions of the Soviet government—this is the urgent task of the Soviets, this is the condition for the complete victory of the Soviet type of state, which it is not enough to proclaim in formal decrees, which it is not enough to establish and introduce in all parts of the country, but which must also be practically organised and tested in the course of the regular, everyday work of administration."¹

The control exercised by the various levels of Soviets over the state administrative machinery is far-reaching, encompassing many essential questions, including the formation of the state apparatus, the content of its activity, and the selection and placing of personnel.

The local Soviets of working people's deputies are responsible for controlling or supervising the work of all enterprises, institutions and organisations within their territorial jurisdiction, irrespective of departmental subordination.

The Soviets employ the following methods in controlling the administrative apparatus:

Reports submitted by subordinate organs are discussed and their activities tentatively investigated.

Reports are delivered at the sessions of Soviets, in the standing committees and to groups of deputies by state administrative organs and officials dealing with the fulfilment of the tasks posed by the given Soviet or by higher authorities.

Questions are put either at a session or in the form of a letter to the organs of administration and the personnel involved.

The Soviet or its standing committee appraises the work of a certain administrative apparatus in connection with a particular question concerning one of the factories, organisations or institutions that comes under its jurisdiction.

The activities of the administrative organs over the ap-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 315.

pointment or election of chief executives or officials are examined.

The control exercised by the administrative bodies themselves is of no less importance. Since this too is an integral part of the socialist control system, it is also based on democratic principles. The mobilisation of citizens not on the permanent staff of the given institution as inspectors and instructors in control work and the establishment of public departments, are evidence of this. As a component of the administrative activities, this form of control is either intra-departmental or supra-departmental. Its distinguishing feature lies in the involvement of organisations, institutions and enterprises that are administratively independent of the control organ.

Supervision and control over the implementation of laws to a large extent rests with the procurator and judicial organs.

The measures of control carried out directly on the initiative of private citizens are considerable. They involve all spheres of economic, social, cultural, administrative and political activity. Public organisations have the right to recommend possible ways of eliminating the existing shortcomings they find in state organs.

The public is very active in preventing crime and safeguarding law and order. The Communist Party attaches tremendous importance to the further strengthening of law and order and the protection of civil rights. The state and the society as a whole defends the rights, the freedom, the honour and the dignity of Soviet citizens. The fight against the violators of public order, and those who break the norms of discipline required at work and in social life; the fight against the plunderers of socialist property, the parasites and the hooligans is the common cause of all working people and of all the organisations which represent them.

The greatest contribution to this cause is made by the comradesly courts and the *voluntary public-order maintenance squads*, which are recruited at factories, construction sites, institutions and collective farms.

Comradesly courts are public organisations designed to help educate people in the spirit of communism: to teach the communist attitude to work and to socialist property, to

spread the norms of a socialist community, to develop collectivism, the practice of comradesly mutual aid, and a respect for the dignity and honour of other citizens.

Their main task is to prevent violations of law and other offences, harmful to society, to educate people by methods of persuasion and public coercion, and to generate an atmosphere antagonistic to all anti-social activity.

Courts of comrades can be inaugurated by the decisions of general meetings of workers, office employees, students of secondary and higher educational establishments, collective farmers, house tenants or residents of villages and settlements. Members of the court are elected by a show of hands for a two-year term. The cases that come under their jurisdiction are violations of work discipline or the rules of behaviour in apartments and hostels, the neglect of safety regulations, improper behaviour in public places and at work, the failure to bring up children properly, a discreditable attitude to parents and women, insults, insinuations, and other offences not covered by the penal law.

Cases are filed by trade-union committees, voluntary public-order maintenance squads, street and residential committees, executive committees of the local Soviets, private citizens or by the courts themselves. The hearings are conducted publicly in off-work hours.

The comradesly court can order the offender to apologise publicly to the person or collective involved in the case; it can reprimand, warn, reproof or fine the offender; and it has the right to demand that the guilty party be transferred to a lower-paid job, be demoted or discharged.

The decision of the comradesly court is final. It is brought to the notice of the public organisations and officials so that they can take steps to eliminate the circumstances which lay at the root of the violation.

The headquarters, sections and Komsomol control groups are all charged with the supervision of certain areas of the state apparatus, and of the administration of enterprises, institutions and organisations.

Such methods as spot check-ups, general inspections and reviews as well as competitions, surveys and books of suggestions and inquiries, are all employed in this work.

Control functions are also exercised by women councils,

school parents' committees, unions of writers, journalists, composers, architects and artists, library and club councils, the society of inventors and rationalisers, and by other public organisations representing the working people.

The USSR Society of Inventors and Rationalisers, for example, is responsible for public control over the elaboration, introduction, dissemination and utilisation of inventions and innovations. It controls the expenditure of allocations made by economic bodies for inventions and innovations, and the observance of laws that have a bearing on this field.

The importance of these functions can be judged from the following statistics. In Leningrad alone there are over one hundred thousand inventors and innovators. Every year they submit approximately 200,000 suggestions for the improvement of methods of production. In the USSR there are in all more than three million inventors and innovators. By applying these proposals industrially the country saves something like 2,300 million rubles yearly.

House committees are responsible for improving living conditions and involving the population in the managing of the state housing fund. Elected at the general meetings of tenants, their work is directed by the local Soviets or, in the case of departmental housing funds, by the trade unions in question.

The house committees take part in working out the economic and financial plans of the house-maintenance committees, in improving the operation of the housing fund, and ensuring that general and routine repairs are undertaken in time and that the workmanship is of good quality. The documents to the effect that the repairs have been completed are invalid unless signed by the representative of the house committee.

Medical institutions have set up their own *public councils*, aimed at fostering the democratic principles of the public health service, and engaging the mass of people in the solution of problems bearing on the improvement of the medical service.

These public councils include representatives of the given medical institution, as well as representatives of Soviet, trade-union, Komsomol and economic organisations, of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and of the house com-

mittees. The councils control the sanitary conditions of production and of communal premises, of trade and public catering enterprises and of child-welfare institutions; other duties include the checking of sick-leave cards and establishing the sources of pollution and noise. The councils take part in suggesting improvements and in examining the routine and long-term plans of medical institutions.

Control exercised directly by citizens is one of the most efficient forms of mass control.

Soviet citizens, irrespective of their membership of public organisations or of their participation in the work of state bodies, have the power to control and assess the state body, with which they come into contact, as to its results, adherence to the existing laws, and compliance with the national interests.

There are elements of control in such forms of direct democracy as the election of representatives to the state organs of power, the recall of deputies, the reports made by deputies and officials to their constituents, in village meetings, meetings of citizens, etc. The numerous forms of expressing public opinion at working people's conferences and congresses are further examples of this control. When discussing and deciding on administrative problems, Soviet citizens are afforded every opportunity of examining the work of state bodies; they have the chance to control and influence this process because their remarks and suggestions are attentively studied, and the most valuable implemented.

Every Soviet citizen has the right to make sincere and frank criticism at meetings or in the press of the shortcomings in the work of the state bodies; he can complain to any Party or state organisation. Such signals are an invaluable source of information on the work of the state apparatus and help to perfect its operation.

The existence in the USSR of these different forms of control can be explained by a series of objective factors: the ever increasing specialisation and division of social labour, expanding economic ties and the rapid social and economic progress. Since all these developments entail an expansion of administrative functions, it becomes impossible to cover them all by a single type of control.

In addition to these bodies, which have other functions

besides control, the Soviet state and the public organisations are setting up bodies exclusively for this purpose. Control, for example, is only one of the functions of the organs of state power and administration; but such bodies as the people's control committees, various state inspection departments dealing with trade, sanitation, veterinary services, technology and electrical communications have no other function beside control.

The system of socialist control is not static. It is being developed and improved so as to increase its democratic nature, abolish the duplication of control organs, improve the forms and methods of work, and establish a clear line of demarcation between the various state and public control agencies, while ensuring, at the same time, their co-ordination.

FROM WORKERS' CONTROL TO MANAGEMENT

When the Communist Party was preparing Russia's proletariat for social revolution, it attached great importance to the establishment of workers' control over social production and the distribution of products.

Lenin first advanced the idea of workers' control in industry in 1905, on the eve of the first Russian revolution. In the *Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* he put forward the idea of workers' inspection of factories and workers' control over enterprises. He saw this as the essential prerequisite for the victory of the revolution and the foundation of a new, socialist state.

The subsequent course of events in Russia and the strikes staged by the proletariat throughout the country for fundamental economic and social changes proved the correctness of Lenin's thesis. The Bolshevik Party headed by its founder and leader, Lenin, was proved to be the spokesman of the basic interests of the working people and the ideas of socialism were shown to have already captured the minds of the exploited and oppressed people.

May 1905 was marked by workers' action in Ivanovo-Voznesensk. The two-month strike was well organised, determined and militant. It was directed by the Council of Workers' Representatives (Deputies), one of the first Soviets of Workers' Deputies. The strike spread to the textile factories of Shuya, Orekhovo-Zuevo and other towns. Workers everywhere began to set up trade unions which, besides

defending the economic interests of workers, put forward political demands.

In the middle of 1916 Lenin declared that "capitalism cannot be vanquished without *taking over the banks*, without repealing *private ownership* of the means of production. These revolutionary measures, however, cannot be implemented without organising the entire people for democratic administration of the means production captured from the bourgeoisie, without enlisting the entire mass of the working people ... for the democratic organisation of their ranks, their forces, their participation in state affairs".¹

This idea also found expression in the appeal "To the Workers Supporting the Struggle against War and the Socialists Who Went Over to the Side of Their Governments", written in the same year. The appeal explained how the imperialist war had made possible the planned management of economy under the leadership of the revolutionary working class "not in the interests of the capitalists, but by expropriating them, under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat, in the interests of the masses who are now perishing from starvation and the other calamities caused by the war".² The appeal went on to discuss workers' control over social production. The workers were advised to make use of those organs of control and co-ordination already set up by monopoly capitalism.

The need to replace the inspection organs of the monopolists by organs of workers' control became particularly evident during the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February, 1917. This was one example of the peculiar nature of the February Revolution which, in both the political and the economic spheres, went far beyond the limits of a typical bourgeois revolution. In the realm of politics, something very like the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry was achieved by the inauguration of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies; in the realm of the economy, workers' control over production was placed on the agenda.

Analysing the situation in Russia after the February Rev-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 25.

² *Ibid.*, p. 230.

olution, Lenin put forward the demand that the old state machinery he smashed and replaced by a general and mass organisation of the armed working people. This was the only form of government, he claimed, that could solve the fundamental problems of the revolution and realise the people's demands for a just peace, confiscation of the estates of landlords, and organisation of the national economy on the basis of workers' control and universal labour conscription.

The Communist Party regarded workers' control, universal labour conscription and various other social measures as transitional steps towards the new social system. "In their entirety and in their development these steps will mark the *transition to socialism*, which cannot be achieved in Russia directly, at one stroke, without transitional measures, but is quite achievable and urgently necessary as a result of such transitional measures."¹

Lenin stressed that not impatience or propaganda, but objective conditions were making it urgently necessary to establish workers' control over production and distribution. With the connivance of the bourgeois Provisional Government the country's economy was going to ruin. The bourgeoisie were sabotaging the work of countless enterprises; 568 enterprises were closed down between March and July 1917. By November at least 300,000 workers were unemployed. In an attempt to intimidate the workers and compel them to retreat, the bourgeoisie resorted to economic subversion. The bourgeois press openly advocated the closure of enterprises as a radical method of putting an end to the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

Under these circumstances, ideas of workers' control quickly won the sympathy of the broad masses. The working class soon realised that only control over production could save the situation and prevent the capitalists creating complete chaos in the economy. The Communist Party's appeal for workers' control was supported by the masses; in many parts of Russia, the Bolsheviks gave a planned and organised character to the spontaneous attempts of the proletariat at establishing control.

The forms that workers' control over production took were

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 341.

varied. *The factory committees* which became the mass revolutionary organisations of the working class were an example of their revolutionary initiative. Control became one of the basic functions of these committees.

In the article "How the Capitalists are Trying to Scare the People", Lenin wrote that it is the "objective conditions and this unprecedented break-down of civilisation that necessitate this control over production and distribution, over the banks, factories, etc. Failing this, tens of millions of people can be said without exaggeration to face inevitable ruin and death".¹

The flight of owners and managers of plants and factories, the plundering of factory property, the absence of fuel, raw materials and equipment, and the frequent cases of arson were all problems requiring prompt action. The workers themselves began to organise production and protect factory property.

The working class in its struggle for control had to overcome tremendous difficulties. The workers had to crush the dogged resistance of the entrepreneurs and their supporters, the bourgeois Provisional Government, and find by trial and error the most rational methods of control.

The proletariat soon compelled the Provisional Government to recognise officially the factory and plant committees which were set up spontaneously during the first days of the revolution. The work of these organisations in the main, involved the regulation of the hire-and-discharge problems arising between workers and entrepreneurs, but soon the course of events expanded the scope of their activities. In March 1917 several Petrograd factory committees established control on their own initiative over the hire and discharge of workers and office employees, began to take stock of raw materials, fuel and machines, guard factory property, setting up detachments of workers' militia and watchmen for this purpose, and took steps to regulate and ensure the normal pace of production.

To counter the attempts of sabotage, the lockouts and the distortion of production the factory committees mobilised the working class to fight economic chaos and hunger. The initiative was taken by the Petrograd working class. The follow-

ing decision taken by the first conference of the factory committee representatives of twelve of the largest factories, uniting nearly 100,000 workers, is an illustration of their mood:

"To deal with those matters concerning the relations between labour and capital, both state or private, and those matters relating to factory regulations, the workers establish democratic organisations with committees elected by the whole factory and separate shops for the purpose of defending the interests of labour against factory administrations and for controlling the administrations' work."¹

The organised resistance of the Russian capitalists to the activities of the factory committees and their attempts to prevent by all means workers' control over production required the factory committees to unite their efforts in the struggle against the bourgeoisie's sabotage attempts and the economic chaos. It was once again the factory committees of the state enterprises, and in particular the artillery works who led the way. They drafted the "Instructions for the Unification of the Workers of State Enterprises" which were adopted by the conference of workers of state enterprises. These Instructions played an important part in the struggle of the Russian proletariat for workers' control over production.

The Instructions pronounced the general factory committees the leading body of each factory. The committees were made responsible for "factory regulations", the "public life of all workers of the given factory", and control over "the activities of the factory management in administrative, economic and technical matters". The representatives of factory committees had the right to examine all official documents of the factory management, including the production estimates and the expenses. It was made plain that factory committees were not obliged to take responsibility for the decisions of the management.²

¹ *Pravda*, April 11, 1917, *Conference of the Representatives of the Artillery Department Factories*, p. 2.

² *The October Revolution and Factory Committees, Materials on the History of Factory and Plant Committees*, (Russ. ed) Part I, Moscow, 1927, pp. 33-34.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 440.

The instructions further envisaged the establishment of a Central Committee to serve as the focal point for all the workers of state factories. "All factory committees of state enterprises and factories should send three representatives each to the Central Committee which, being the centre unifying all factory committees, directs the work of all state enterprises and controls the work of the administrations."¹

The struggle to end the sabotaging activities of entrepreneurs and establish workers' control was underway in other parts of Russia as well.

A conference of factory committee representatives from the textile industries situated in the Central Industrial Area, took place in the middle of June 1917. The situation in the factories was discussed and a decision to fight against the lockouts adopted. "There is absolutely no proof of the need to close down the textile industry," the resolution stated. "Stoppages can be tolerated only in exceptional cases."

"1. Not a single plant or factory can be closed without a preliminary inspection by the control commission set up by the local supply agencies and the representatives of the factory committee.

"2. In cases of malicious lockout attempts by entrepreneurs, the district supply agency is duty bound to confiscate the enterprise in question.

"3. When the committee finds that production is impossible because of the shortage of cotton or fuel, the workers should be considered to be on paid vacation.

"4. The term for which the enterprise is to be closed is fixed by the control commission; hire contracts cannot be cancelled.

"5. Under no circumstances can factory committees be dissolved, they must not be touched."²

Pravda printed an interesting letter from a miner of the Alexandrovsk pit which characterised the mood of the advanced workers in the summer of 1917. Their attitudes towards the Provisional Government, the parties favouring

¹ *The October Revolution and Factory Committees. Materials on the History of Factory and Plant Committees*, Part 1, p. 35.

² *The Revolutionary Movement in Russia in May-June 1917. The June Demonstration. Documents and Materials*, (Russ. ed.) Moscow, USSR Academy of Sciences' Publishing House, 1959, p. 309.

conciliation and the Bolshevik Party are plain. The letter reads:

"From the depths of the mines we, miners, can see that the gentlemen like Skobelev, Chernov and Tsereteli¹ act hand in arm with the bourgeoisie, and we know that only the Bolsheviks led by Lenin are fighting for the interests of the workers. We are branded as 'Lenin's adherents' just because we are controlling the work in the mine. But just see why we are Leninists. The management keeps on curtailing the output of coal on the excuse that there is a shortage of this or that. So we checked up. And what do you think? It took some hard work but we found pig iron and timber and many other things. As a result, we have now increased the output of coal. . . . We do not know Lenin personally, but we understand what he is speaking about. He helps us, talks about the things we want to know about."

In July 1917 a general meeting of factory committees in Saratov adopted a resolution on the composition and functions of factory and plant control commissions. They were to be made up of three members of the factory committee. In cases where the factory committee was composed of three members or less, it was made responsible as a body for control work. The control commissions were to be entrusted with the following functions:

1. control over all the materials, including raw materials and fuel belonging to the enterprise, their rational utilisation, and control over the finances of the enterprise;

2. control over movement of all the materials from the enterprise and approval of the management's applications for raw materials and fuel;

3. control over the timely repair and refurnishing of equipment;

4. supervision of state orders: their acceptance and timely fulfilment.²

This was one of the most comprehensive instructions

¹ Leaders of the petty-bourgeois parties who backed the Provisional Government.

² *The Revolutionary Movement in Russia in July 1917. The July Crisis. Documents and Materials*, (Russ. ed.) Moscow, USSR Academy of Sciences' Publishing House, 1959, pp. 360-61.

concerning ways of establishing workers' control at enterprises to be adopted before the October Revolution.

In its programme for the transformation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution, the Communist Party planned the confiscation of all landed estates and the nationalisation of all land; the amalgamation of all banks into a single national bank, and its subordination to the Soviets of workers' deputies, and workers' control over production. "It is not our *immediate* task," Lenin wrote, "to 'introduce' socialism, but only to bring social production and the distribution of products at once under the control of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies."¹

The slogan of workers' control was formulated in the decisions of the All-Russia Conference of the Bolshevik Party in April 1917: "To bring about the prompt consolidation and extension of revolutionary achievements throughout the country it is necessary to mobilise the support of the majority of the local population, organise and increase initiative in every way possible, so that freedoms are realised, counter-revolutionary officials removed, and economic reforms such as control over production and distribution, are achieved."²

Factory committees set up special control commissions entrusted with the inspection of matters concerning administration, finance, production, technology, supply, fuel and wastes.

The slogan of workers' control put forward by Lenin and approved by the Bolshevik Party was very popular among the working people. It was in fact one of the chief slogans of the working class during that period; workers' control was considered as part and parcel of the proletariat's struggle for power.

Workers' control was a challenge to capital, it was a threat to the principles of the capitalist system, an intrusion into the bourgeois world of private property and private enterprise. That was at any rate how the bourgeoisie saw workers' control.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 24.

² *The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and Plenums of the Central Committee*, 7th Russ. ed., Part. I, Moscow, 1953, p. 339.

An article in the *Gornozavodskoye Delo* (Mining Industry), an established spokesman for the interest of South Russia's monopolies, included the following: "It is not only the activities of the entrepreneurs that are endangered by workers' control, but the entire system of capitalist relations. If the workers can control and direct the work of an enterprise, there is no need for an entrepreneur. . . . If the workers were able to control production, the entrepreneur would become redundant."¹

In their fight against workers' control, the petty-bourgeois parties of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries tried to intimidate the workers by prophecies of anarchy in production and the ruin of the economy. They made slanderous declarations to the effect that workers were "ruining the industry". "Under the banner of control," they said, "you are running the enterprises, creating chaos and anarchy in production, contributing thereby to the economic dislocation."² Bourgeois organisations sent instructions to their members on what measures to take to counteract workers' control, and they appealed to the Provisional Government to take steps against the workers' "intolerable" behaviour.

But all such attempts were futile. The workers realised the power that control gave them and acted courageously and persistently. The first Petrograd Conference of Factory Committees held from June 12 to June 16, 1917, is an illustration of this.

In the course of the proceedings it became clear that some factory committees had begun, in addition to their control functions, to manage the enterprises and cope with the economic and financial problems. A representative of the Schlüsselburg Gunpowder Factory, for instance, said that "six weeks ago the administration decided to close the factory. The workers took up the problem seriously; after all they were threatened with unemployment. The situation was aggravated by the fact that we have, in addition, a brick factory and a big dairy—all of them owned by Baron Medem.

¹ *Gornozavodskoye Delo*, (Russ. ed.) 1917, Nos. 36, 37, pp. 16, 328.

² *Materials of the Second All-Russia Congress of the Soviets of National Economy*, (Russ. ed.) Moscow, 1919, p. 336.

The workers had to decide whether or not to take over the management. . . . A lot of noise was made over this issue.

"The bourgeois press began to cry about anarchy. The prosecutor, and then the delegates from the Provisional Government and the Executive Council of the Soviets headed by Chkheidze came rushing to the spot. And they had to admit that there was nothing wrong. On the contrary, production had been raised, and the workers were proving themselves efficient managers of the brick factory and the dairy."

While Lenin was preparing the Party and the working class for an armed uprising against the bourgeoisie and for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, he was simultaneously working out a plan of building the new, socialist society. In all his writings of the pre-October period he posed the question of the new government's measures in the field of economic reforms. In his article "The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It" he mapped out the most comprehensive and scientifically substantiated plan for the fight against catastrophe and hunger and guidelines for the building of socialism. The proposals were based entirely on an analysis of the current political and economic situation, and fully complied with the historic development of Russia.

Lenin considered that the immediate and nation-wide establishment of effective workers' control with the participation of the broad masses of the working people was the most important measure in the fight to combat the imminent economic catastrophe.

"...Control, supervision, accounting, regulation by the state, introduction of a proper distribution of labour-power in the production and distribution of goods, husbanding of the people's forces, the elimination of all wasteful effort, economy of effort. Control, supervision and accounting are the prime requisites for combating catastrophe and famine."¹

To grasp fully the situation throughout the country, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party at the Sixth

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 324.

Party Congress (July-August 1917) distributed a "Questionnaire to the Delegates of the All-Russia Congress". Three of the questions concerned the problem of workers' control:

"Do workers raise the question of control over production and co-ordination of work in the enterprise?"

"Have there been cases of workers intervening in the affairs of the administration? If so, give details.

"If cases of intervention have been noted, what role did your organisation play in them?"¹

The answers were of tremendous importance in establishing the scale of workers' control and its effectiveness. The survey indicated that workers' control had been established in one form or another at practically all industrial enterprises.

Lenin always insisted that the introduction of workers' control was only possible if the following vital measures had been taken:

"(1) Amalgamation of all banks into a single bank, and state control over its operations, or nationalisation of the banks.

"(2) Nationalisation of the syndicates, i.e., the largest, monopolistic capitalist associations (sugar, oil, coal, iron and steel, and other syndicates).

"(3) Abolition of commercial secrecy.

"(4) Compulsory syndication (i.e., compulsory amalgamation into associations) of industrialists, merchants and employers generally.

"(5) Compulsory organisation of the population into consumers' societies, or encouragement of such organisation, and the exercise of control over it."²

During the preparation for the armed uprising Lenin wrote in the article "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" that "the chief difficulty facing the proletarian revolution is the establishment on a country-wide scale of the most precise and most conscientious accounting and control, of workers' control of the production and distribution of goods", but the task was quite feasible because under the

¹ Sixth Congress of the RSDLP(B). *Minutes*, (Russ. ed.) Moscow, 1958, p. 318.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 329.

dictatorship of the proletariat "workers' control *can* become the country-wide, all-embracing, omnipresent, most precise and most conscientious *accounting* of the production and distribution of goods."¹

Lenin was perfectly well aware that the full implementation of this programme could be undertaken only after the Soviets had seized power.

The victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution made the organisation of the country's administration essential. Having won political power, the working class had to crush the apparatus of the old bourgeois and landlords and build a state founded on completely different principles. Only a republic of Soviets, according to Lenin, could advise this. "If the creative enthusiasm of the revolutionary classes had not given rise to the Soviets, the proletarian revolution in Russia would have been a hopeless cause."²

Lenin declared that the organisation of *control* and *accounting* was one of the most pressing tasks and one which offered a powerful means of curbing the overthrown classes and a highly convenient method of encouraging the working people to take part in managing the affairs of the new society. Besides substantiating theoretically the need and role of public and state control under socialism, Lenin organised its practical introduction.

At 10 o'clock in the morning of November 7, 1917, Lenin proclaimed in the Soviet Government's first document, the appeal *To the Citizens of Russia*: "The cause for which the people have fought, namely, the immediate offer of a democratic peace, the abolition of landed proprietorship, workers' control over production, and the establishment of Soviet power—this cause has been secured."³

On the same day, while addressing the session of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, Lenin declared: "We shall institute genuine workers' control over production."⁴ The resolution which he wrote and which was adopted by the Soviet promised that the government of

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 104-05.

² *Ibid.*, p. 104.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

workers and peasants would "institute workers' control over the production and distribution of goods and establish national control over the banks, at the same time transforming them into a single state enterprise."¹

The Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets called upon the workers to set up their control everywhere.

Immediately following the victory of the revolution, Lenin, who attributed exceptional importance to this question, worked out a Draft Statute of Workers' Control which set forth the tasks facing workers' control, and the rights and duties of its various bodies. On November 15, 1917, the Statute was approved by the Council of People's Commissars and made public.

This was the first decree to lay the foundation of the USSR's system of control. Two days after the publication of the Statute Lenin wrote in his appeal *To the Population*: "Comrades, working people! Remember that now *you yourselves* are at the helm of state. . . . Ensure the strictest control over production and accounting of products. Arrest and hand over to the revolutionary courts all who dare to injure the people's cause, irrespective of whether the injury is manifested in sabotaging production (damage, delay and subversion), or in hoarding grain and products or holding up shipments of grain, disorganising the railways and the postal, telegraph and telephone services, or any resistance whatever to the great cause of peace, the cause of transferring the land to the peasants, of ensuring workers' control over the production and distribution of products. . . . Be watchful and guard like the apple of your eye your land, grain, factories, equipment, products, transport—all that from now onwards will be *entirely* your property, public property."²

The decree on workers' control envisaged a harmonious system of control bodies, ranging from factory committees to the All-Russia Council of Workers' Control. Their main task was to safeguard industry, suppress capitalist sabotage, and organise economic life along socialist lines.

Workers' control involved all industrial, trade, banking, agricultural and other enterprises, as well as enterprises

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 26, pp. 297-98.

which employed people working at home. The decree emphasised the vital need of ensuring that mass control is exercised by all workers and all organisations of the given enterprise or institution, including the plant and factory committees, the councils of elders, etc.

The decree insisted that particular attention be given to the main branches of production. The organs of workers' control were to supervise the process of production, fix the volume of output, analyse production costs, control the procurement, marketing and storage of raw materials and products, and check financial transactions. They were given the right to inspect *all* books and documents and *all* warehouses and stocks of materials, tools and products without exception. No changes in production, and in particular no stoppages, could be introduced without the permission of workers' control bodies.

The decree made all proprietors of enterprises and all elected representatives of workers and office employees responsible before the state for strict order, discipline, protection of property and correct accounting and summary reports. The proprietors were obliged to comply with all instructions issued by the organisations of workers' control; the instructions could be reversed only by the higher authorities.

As soon as the decree was made public, the working masses began to set up workers' control organs throughout the land. Though the working people had no experience in this field, they went ahead to elect factory committees, councils of elders and other mass organisations for controlling the work of enterprises and institutions.

This campaign was particularly well organised in Petrograd, Moscow, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, the Donbas and the Urals. By the beginning of 1918 factory committees had been established in 88 per cent of the enterprises in Moscow, and economic control commissions in 288 of the 600 enterprises. By March of the same year control commissions had been set up at 222 of the 280 enterprises in Moscow Region.

Workers' control greatly contributed to the suppression of private entrepreneurs and the struggle against post-war devastation. Early in 1918 Lenin wrote that "workers' control

and the nationalisation of the banks are being put into practice, and these are the first steps towards socialism".¹

The working people used the organs of workers' control to grapple with the problems of industrialising such a huge country and in their fight against the exploiters. Soviet reality was a daily proof that Lenin's thesis was correct and that ordinary workers and peasants once they got started could and would learn to manage the industry and the state.

Their part in the work of factory committees, town and provincial organs of control gave workers economic and organisational experience. They studied the questions of the organisation of production, planning, and accounting; gradually they began to understand financial matters and the problems of raw material and fuel supply. Their involvement in this work taught them how to manage production.

Workers' control contributed to the consolidation of the gains the October Revolution had won in the economic field; it prepared and smoothed the way for the socialist nationalisation of industry, and introduced conditions that allowed for creativity and mass initiative in the building of new life.

Under the screen of revolutionary slogans, the "Left Communists" came out against Lenin's idea of general accounting and control, ignoring the role and importance of workers' control. They attempted to justify their position by references to Marx's slogan on the need to "expropriate the expropriators". But Karl Marx and Frederick Engels had written in the Communist Manifesto that "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, *i.e.*, of the proletariat organised as the ruling class; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible."²

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels never pressed the solution of the problem. Lenin exposed the petty-bourgeois essence of the attitude of "Left Communists" to the Marxist slogan "expropriation of the expropriators". The petty bourgeois understood the slogan from the anarchist viewpoint—"plunder the loot". Lenin wrote that the petty bourgeois had

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 400.

² Marx and Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 126.

"one desire—to grab, to get as much as possible for himself, to ruin and snash the big landowners, the big exploiters. In this the petty proprietor eagerly supports us.

"Here he is more revolutionary than the workers, because he is more embittered and more indignant."¹

But the proletarian revolution says: "Count up what was stolen and don't let it be filched piecemeal, and if people start filching for themselves directly or indirectly, these infringers of discipline must be shot. . . ."²

Lenin repeated time and again that socialism means accounting, and that the most important task of the dictatorship of the proletariat was to advance in every possible manner accounting and control making it a universal national phenomenon. To implement this plan it was necessary to recruit the workers and peasants and place all state organisations and enterprises under the constant control of the people. When control and accounting really become widespread and nation-wide when everybody knows how to manage social production and when it becomes impossible to escape control, it will be impossible to evade one's responsibilities before society, there will be no violations of public order, and parasites and swindlers will find it difficult to escape punishment. The task of such a nation-wide, all-seeing control is to ensure by educational, administrative and, if need be, by measures of compulsion the general observance of public rules at work and in private life.

During the first years of the revolution the bourgeois press time and again took up the question of the practical implementation of workers' control.

In most cases these bourgeois writers of books and articles distorted the essence and organisational forms of workers' control. Some declared it a "horrible change", others believed that as a result of workers' control, "the workers and not the State became the employers in the nationalised industries. . . . Capitalist anarchy was superseded by proletarian anarchy."³ The French economist, A. Burvil, writes that

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 294.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 27, p. 307.

³ S. N. Prokopovitch, *The Economic Condition of Soviet Russia*, London, 1924, p. 10.

because of workers' control "the axis of the economic movement was displaced and the enterprises found themselves in the position of a ship without a compass left to the fiercy of the winds".¹

Similar claims are made in works being brought out today in Britain, the United States and the other capitalist countries. In 1959 the American economist D. Bell wrote: "But, given the chaos of the time, workers' control was inevitably a mockery."²

False and slanderous statements are made to the effect that workers' control was not a thought-out policy of the Bolshevik Party, nor was it the first step toward socialism.

According to the American historian H. Avrich, "during the spring when it had seemed necessary in order to undermine the existing order, Lenin had joined forces with the Anarcho-Syndicalists in support of the factory committees and workers' control" and again: "during the first weeks of its existence, the Bolshevik Government had supported the factory committees and workers' control in order to secure the loyalty of the proletarian rank and file". At the beginning of 1918, H. Avrich goes on to say, Lenin "sided with the Menshevik and rightist Bolshevik champions of the trade unions and of state control".³

Ignoring the obvious facts, the bourgeois critics of workers' control attempt to deny that its introduction ensured the wide-scale reorganisation of the running of industry, banks and trade. Shop committees, says D. Bell in an article in the *World Politics* magazine, were unable to organise and mobilise the unruly workers. If the committees tried to take some action, he claims, the workers immediately held new elections.⁴

It is quite clear that almost all bourgeois scholars are ful-

¹ A. Burvil, *L'organisation économique de régime Soviétique*, Paris, 1924, p. 63.

² D. Bell, *One Road from Marx: On the Vision of Socialism and the Fate of Workers' Control in Socialist Thought*. In *World Politics*, N. Y., Vol. XI, No. 4, July 1959, p. 506.

³ H. Avrich, *The Bolshevik Revolution and Workers' Control in Russian Industry*, in *Slavic Review*, March 1963, p. 60.

⁴ D. Bell, *One Road from Marx: On the Vision of Socialism and the Fate of Workers' Control in Socialist Thought*. In *World Politics*, N. Y., p. 506.

filling a task, essential from the point of view of the reactionary forces in the imperialist countries. Their job is to distort the history of the socialist changes in the USSR, slander the Communist Party's policies concerning the working class, and cast slurs on the idea of workers' control.

This, on the one hand, is a manifestation of the hatred the imperialist bourgeoisie harbours for the working class of the USSR, which took the first step in the history of mankind to open up the road to socialism. On the other hand, it is an attempt to prevent the proletariat of the other countries from learning from the experience of the Soviet system of workers' control.

But falsehood cannot hide the truth about the Soviet Union. Workers' control and the subsequent socialist nationalisation of industry created the conditions for a new organisation of production and of social labour. It was through the organisations of proletarian control that the working class first learned the art of managing production. This however was only the first step in establishing the administration of the country's economy. In mid-1918, when the nationalisation of industry had been almost completed and the system of workers' control had fulfilled its initial task of curbing the capitalists, Lenin advanced the task of establishing state control.

All control in any state, Lenin taught, derives from the essence of state power and, therefore, reflects the interests of the ruling class. After the victory of the proletariat, control, naturally, acquires a new significance dependent on the essence of the proletarian state, the chief aspects of which are its economic, organisational, cultural and educational functions.

In 1918 the Council of People's Commissars set up a Central Control Board, local auditing and control boards and also elective control commissions in institutions and enterprises which provided a base for the former.

A year later, after examining the draft decree on the establishment of a single system of state control, Lenin wrote:

"I think the following should be added to the decree on control:

"1) formation of central (and local) bodies with workers' participation;

"2) introduction by law of the systematic participation of witnesses from among the workers, with compulsory participation of up to two-thirds women;

"3) giving immediate priority to the following as our urgent tasks:

"(a) lightning inquiries into citizens' complaints

"(b) combating red-tape

"(c) revolutionary measures to combat abuses and red tape

"(d) special attention to boosting labour productivity, and

"(e) to increasing the quantity of products, etc.,"¹

Time and again Lenin returned to the idea of the participation of the broad masses in control: "You must recruit," he said at a session of the Moscow Soviet, "the most diffident and undeveloped, the most timid of the workers for the workers' inspection and promote them . . . let them gradually proceed from the simple duties they are able to carry out — at first only as onlookers — to more important functions of state. You will secure a flow of assistants from the widest sources who will take upon themselves the burden of government, who will come to lend a hand and to work. We need tens of thousands of new advanced workers. Turn for support to the non-party workers and peasants. . . ."²

These remarks on basic principles influenced the decree "On State Control" approved by the All-Russia Executive Committee in April 1919. All agencies of departmental control, control groups at enterprises and organisations were amalgamated into a single body of state control, which had the following functions: to control the implementation of the decrees of the Party and Government by the Soviet organisations, to fight bad management and bureaucracy, and to analyse the experience of state building and improvement of the administrative machinery.

The decree declared merciless war on bureaucracy and on all other distortions and shortcomings in the work of the Soviet State machinery, and it pointed out that success depends on the participation of workers and peasants in the

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 486.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 30, p. 415.

management of the state. Only the involvement of the broad masses of workers and peasants into the country's administration, and the establishment of mass control over the organs of management can eliminate shortcomings, clear the Soviet organisations of bureaucratic evils, and propel forward the cause of socialist construction.

The decree proclaimed the principle of the democratisation of state control and the closest contact with the mass of workers and peasants. It introduced the system of witnesses chosen from the people's representatives. Spot-checks by public organisations were encouraged. The decree was not a departure from but a development of the old conceptions of control. Formerly, state control had been limited to financial problems alone, but henceforward it became means by which the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars could check the work of all agencies and institutions, and the implementation of Soviet decrees.

State control was entrusted with the task of drafting concrete proposals for simplifying the administrative machinery, eliminating duplication, inefficiency, and red tape, as well as with changing the system of management in some branches of the economy. State control was given the right to supervise the activity of all people's commissariats and departments to check their work by assessing results, and to file cases against officials who had committed offences or crimes, or remove them from office.

On April 11, 1919, the newspaper *Bednota* (The Village Poor) declared in an article "Workers' and Peasants' Control" that "the Commissariat of State Control, which will include representatives of the mass of workers and peasants, will henceforth not only check financial accounts, but also demand honest and conscientious work from all Soviet officials".

From that time onwards the control was responsible not only for pointing out shortcomings and mistakes, but also for eliminating and preventing any unfavourable development. Its task was to take prompt action, in one or another form, against violations of the Soviet laws and thus prevent such events recurring and educate the working people to observe the law.

Lenin did not tolerate those who disgraced the name of

communist or patronised the offenders of the law, thereby undermining the authority of the Party among the people.

A. Divilkovsky, an official of the Secretariat of the Council of People's Commissars, at Lenin's request took part in checking the work of the Moscow Soviet about which there had been several complaints. Lenin wrote to the Politbureau of the Central Committee:

"This is not the first time that the Moscow Committee (and Comrade Zelensky¹ too) is showing *indulgence* towards communist criminals, who deserve to be hanged.

"This is done by 'mistake'. The danger of this 'mistake', however, is enormous. *I move*:

"1. That Comrade Divilkovsky's proposal *be adopted*.

"2. That the Moscow Committee be severely reprimanded for being *indulgent* to Communists (the form of indulgence—a special commission).

"3. That it be confirmed to all Gubernia Party Committees that for the slightest attempt to 'influence' the courts in the sense of 'mitigating' the responsibility of Communists, the C.C. will *expel* such persons *from the Party*.

"4. That a circular be issued notifying the People's Commissariat for Justice (copies to the Gubernia Party Committees) to the effect that the courts are obliged to punish Communists *more severely* than non-Communists.

"People's judges and members of the Board of the Commissariat for Justice who fail to observe this are to be *dismissed from office*.

"5. That the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee be asked to *inflict* a reprimand on the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet in the press.

Lenin

18. III.

"P. S. It is a crying shame, disgraceful—the ruling Party defends 'its own' scoundrels!!"²

In May 1918, having learned that the Moscow Revolutionary Tribunal, examining the case of four state officials who were charged with bribery, had sentenced them to only six

¹ N. A. Zelensky was then Secretary of the Moscow Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).—*Ed.*

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, pp. 408-09.

months of imprisonment, Lenin wrote a letter full of indignation to the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, demanding that the judges who examined the case be purged from the Party for such leniency:

"To award bribe-takers such derisively weak and mild sentences, instead of shooting, is *disgraceful* behaviour for a Communist and revolutionary. Such comrades must be *pil-
loried* by the court of public opinion and *expelled from the
Party*, for their place is at the side of Kerensky and Martov¹
and not at the side of revolutionary Communists."²

In May 1919, *Pravda* published an appeal from the People's Commissariat of State Control to "All Citizens of the Soviet Republic" which announced the establishment of central and local bureaus of complaints and described how they would work.

Any citizen had the right to raise a complaint in written or oral form, which if not slanderous or false, was guaranteed complete security and would be kept confidential if so requested. The bureaus examined all these complaints and all information dealing with violations of decrees and orders, with abuses, red-tape, and rude behaviour on the part not only of local authorities, but also of central agencies, including the people's commissariats. Complaints against the decrees taken by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars were not to be examined, but if they were very numerous, they could be used as the basis for the government to reverse the decree or ruling in question.

A formal and careless attitude towards letters from working people always aroused Lenin's indignation. Once F. Romanov, a peasant from Yaroslavl Gubernia, and I. Kalinin, a peasant from Moscow Gubernia, complained to the Secretariat of the Council of People's Commissars that the local authorities had unlawfully requisitioned their horses. The complaints were passed on to a special commission, which dealt with such matters, but were returned to the Council of People's Commissars, the following note written on the en-

¹ Kerensky headed the bourgeois Provisional Government in 1917. Martov was the leader of the Menshevik Party.—*Ed.*

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 322.

velope: "There is too much work and no time to waste on such trifles." Lenin was so outraged that he advised V. Avanesov of the State Control Commission to *arrest* the official who had replied in such a way.¹

The example of Lenin's activity was a lesson for Party and state officials on how to check at the first sign any infringement of the rights and interests of citizens and the state. Typical in this respect is the cable he sent to the Novgorod Gubernia Executive Committee in June 1919: "Apparently, Bulatov has been arrested for complaining to me. I warn you that I shall have the chairmen of the Gubernia Executive Committee and Extraordinary Commission, and the members of the Executive Committee arrested for this and will insist on their being shot. Why did you not reply at once to my inquiry?"²

Lenin considered that the greatest responsibility of every state official, Communist or Soviet activist was his fight against bureaucracy and red-tape. He said: "We shall be fighting the evils of bureaucracy for many years to come, and whoever thinks otherwise is playing demagogue and cheating, because overcoming the evils of bureaucracy requires hundreds of measures, wholesale literacy, culture and participation in the activity of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection."³

Lenin's ideas of mass all-embracing, ever-active control were developed further by the creation of *Workers' and Peasants' Inspection*. The first units made their appearance in the second half of 1919 and in 1920 spread widely.

Workers' control as a form of the people's participation in government continued to function alongside state control. The experience of workers' control was applied to the system of inspecting state institutions. In practice these inspections consisting mainly of workers, who took up turn to serve, were the chief organs of control. These inspectors enjoyed all the rights of state controllers but were responsible to their collective.

In 1920 it was decided to amalgamate the two forms of

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 511.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 44, p. 232.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 32, p. 68.

control into the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection (WPI) which was charged with the tasks of improving the state machinery, drawing the people into the government of the country, exercising control functions in the field of finances and protecting socialist property, etc.

WPI branches were opened up in gubernias, districts, and towns. Enterprises, institutions, army units and villages established WPI assistance groups; trade unions set up assistance commissions.

Any working person could be elected to WPI; the elections were held in such a way as to involve gradually all employees of the given enterprise in the inspection work. Lenin said that "workers must enter all the government establishments so as to supervise the entire government apparatus. And this should be done by the non-party workers, who should elect their representatives at non-party conferences of workers and peasants."¹

Members of WPI were elected at general meetings either permanently or for a temporary period of up to four months. The most capable people who had both experience and initiative were elected as constant members; people with less experience were chosen to perform temporary control functions.

WPI assistance groups superintended the work of the administration, checked the legality and expediency of their activity, controlled the safekeeping of valuable materials and goods, and accepted complaints. They were elected at general meetings of the working people to whom they reported at least once a month. In a letter to all Party committees, the Central Committee of the Communist Party emphasised the necessity of inaugurating WPI assistance groups everywhere, of holding elections in plants, factories and villages, popularising the idea of socialist control, and of establishing firm links with the working masses.

The People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection launched a campaign for the establishment of WPI assistance groups. By the middle of 1921 there were 12,000 such groups with a total membership of nearly 40,000 people.

In the summer of 1921, the Commissariat organised an

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 351.

Assistance Commission to Economic Organs. This action was taken a few days after Lenin had mentioned to A. Korostelev, a member of the board of the People's Commissariat of WPI, that the stagnation, bureaucracy and sluggishness of economic organs seriously impeded the correct implementation of the New Economic Policy.

"You," Lenin said to A. Korostelev, "are a member of the Board of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, you are a member of the Government, and you have access to all factories and plants; you are a worker and therefore it is easier for you to talk with workers than it is for the officials of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

"Set up a small group of workers from factories and a few honest specialists; take a few enterprises, investigate them and see how they are supplied with fuel, food and money; find out who and what obstruct their work, call those guilty to account for their faults and try to help and assist the enterprises and workers by making use of your powers.

"If we succeed in removing the obstacles to the New Economic Policy, it will be a good example, particularly here, in Moscow, and it will have a big political and subsequently economic effect."¹

Korostelev set to work. He did not have immediate successes and reported his difficulties, asking Lenin for help. The reply came immediately:

"The task of your commission is exceptionally important, responsible and difficult. . . .

"It is much more difficult to work in Moscow than in the provinces, there is more bureaucracy here, more corrupt and spoilt 'top-ranking' people and so on.

"But on the other hand, the work in Moscow will be of tremendous *political* significance as a demonstration lesson. . . .

"The main thing is not to squander the energy, it is better to choose a few enterprises and undertake small tasks, to set oneself modest goals at first, but to strive for them persistently, not forgetting things already started, not stopping half-way, but completing everything you undertake.

¹ *Lenin Miscellany VIII*, p. 29.

"You must be sure gradually to enlist *non-Party*, honest and respected *workers* in all districts. . . .

"The main thing is to accustom the workers and the populace to the commission so that they would *feel its assistance*; it is important *to win the confidence* of the masses—non-Party people, ordinary workers and men-in-the-street."¹

Lenin attentively followed the work of WPI, criticised its shortcomings, helping it to acquire greater authority and expand its functions so as to create a genuinely socialist people's control, a machinery for inspecting and improving all work conducted by the state. In the letter "Tasks of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and How They Are to Be Understood and Fulfilled" Lenin formulated the main task of that body as follows: to study the organisation of work and timely implement the necessary changes. Later he developed the idea in a series of articles, including "How We should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection", "Better Fewer, but Better", "On Co-operation", and others.

After the Civil War the country was faced with the task of consolidating and improving the state machinery. The Communist Party believed that economic rehabilitation and the consolidation of the union between workers and peasants depended on the efficiency of the state machinery and the character of its links with the masses of working people. Under these circumstances the organs of control had to solve new problems and WPI charged with the following tasks became an effective instrument in the transformation of the Soviet state machinery.

A practical and theoretical analysis of the state machinery in order to make clear its good and bad points; the implementation of proposals aimed at improving the methods of management, clerical work and accounting; a study of the best methods of accounting, calculating and book-keeping; a drafting of plans for changing the structure of state agencies.

WPI were to guide the work of all institutions studying scientific methods of labour, production and management; inspect the work of all state and public enterprises and their amalgamations and assess their results; the systematic improve-

¹ *Lenin Miscellany VIII*, pp. 30-31.

ments achieved on the basis of research and scientific data.

They were to control the implementation of laws and decrees, and in particular those measures aimed at the improvement of the state machinery; analyse scrupulously the state budget of the USSR, the budgets of the union republics and local budgets, their financial feasibility and economic expediency; control and assess the work of heads and officials of administrative and economic bodies; assist in the selection of personnel, and in taking measures to train workers and peasants for leading and responsible positions, and to support loyal officials.

A further task was to analyse the causes of crime and inefficiency in state organs, to struggle against bribery and the disregard of the need of workers and peasants.

In addition, WPI was given special assignments by the legislative bodies of the USSR, and controlled the implementation of their resolutions.

WPI had a host of duties but it also had many rights.

WPI had the right to inspect all central and local state administrative agencies, enterprises and institutions, as well as joint-stock and mixed companies. It had the right to demand of these state agencies any information, including papers, documents, reports, etc., to require the chiefs and officials to attend its sessions, give personal explanations of their activity and suggest measures that would lead to the elimination of shortcomings and to the improvement of their work.

WPI could insist on the discharge of officials, advise the heads of the agencies under inspection to reprimand an offender, file lawsuits and administrative cases and bring actions against individuals for damage to the state.

The control organs would bring up before the central and local authorities proposals for simplifying the administrative structure, reducing personnel and eliminating shortcomings. They annulled illegal acts and orders. WPI had a consultative voice in every standing organ, commission and conferences called by the higher state authorities at sessions of the boards of people's commissaries, on executive committees of Soviets, and at departmental and interdepartmental conferences and congresses.

WPI could publish in the press the names of people found

guilty of inefficiency, slipshod work or disregard of the needs of the working people.

Thus, WPI was granted many rights which enabled it to fulfil its important assignments and actively help the people to build a new life. The number of workers taking part in the work of WPI grew every year. In 1929, for instance, over 180,000 people in the Ukraine alone were engaged in the activity of WPI, as against 184,000 for the whole country in 1920-21.

The mass organisations of working people made use of the great experience gathered by the control agencies. In 1927-29, for example, Komсомол organised the so-called light brigades for improving the work of the state machinery. The light brigades took part in all mass inspections sponsored by WPI. In 1930 the light brigades numbered more than 250,000 members.

WPI served as an example to all government agencies and thus the Communist Party was very careful in selecting executive chiefs for the control bodies. The Party selected the most authoritative, competent and capable people who could organise efficient and unbiased control. The control bodies in the USSR were headed by such prominent leaders as Stalin, Kuibyshev, Ordjonikidze, Tsyurupa, Andreyev and Rudzutak; Krupskaya, Ulyanova, Yaroslavsky, Zemlyachka, as well as Dzerzhinsky, Shvernik and other state leaders were also very active in control work.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union resolutely denounced the personality cult which damaged the organisation of control among the masses but was not able to change the genuinely democratic nature of the Soviet system. The CPSU eliminated the consequences of the personality cult and thus opened up broad opportunities for public initiative and for the development of socialist democracy.

Following its 20th Congress, the CPSU began a consistent implementation of a series of major steps aimed at drawing the masses into the management of state and public affairs. In 1961, the 22nd Congress of the CPSU elaborated important theoretical and practical questions of the advancement of socialist democracy and the raising of the role of state and public control.

The scale of economic and cultural achievement was ex-

panding, the masses were actively engaged in creative work, their initiative was on the rise and democratic principles were spreading. In such a situation it was necessary to involve more people in checking that the Soviet, economic and other authorities implemented the Party and Government decrees and to mobilise people in the struggle for the consolidation of state discipline and socialist law.

With this aim in view, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted, in December 1965, a law on People's Control in the USSR which established the People's Control Committee of the USSR and people's control committees in republics, territories, regions, towns and districts, as well as groups and sections of people's control attached to village Soviets of Working People's Deputies, enterprises, collective farms, various institutions and organisations and army units.

Experience proved that this decision aimed at the improvement of the control system and the mobilisation of millions of working people to take part in the management of state affairs had been the correct one.

The Statute of the People's Control Organs in the USSR is firmly based on Lenin's teaching about the role of genuinely mass and permanent control in a socialist community. The Statute is based on the achievements of control organs both within the Soviet Union and in the other socialist countries.

The organs of people's control are now concentrating their efforts on the consolidation of state discipline, improvement of the administrative machinery and reduction of its maintenance expenses. They are concerned with the tapping of latent reserves of the economy and with stepping up the struggle against inefficiency and extravagance.

The work of the people's control organs is a concrete example of the Communist Party's concern for the development of socialist democracy.

In his speech on the 100th anniversary of Lenin's birth, Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, said:

"In order to ensure the rights of the Soviet citizens, the Party is daily concerned with the improvement of the forms of people's representation and people's control over the activities of the organs of power and management."

The 24th Congress of the CPSU, which took place early in 1971, paid much attention to the problems related to the strengthening of the Soviet state. The Congress pointed out that the improvement of the organs of people's control was an indispensable measure as far as the further advancement of Soviet democracy was concerned.

The Resolution of the 24th Congress on the Report by the Central Committee notes that "An improvement must be achieved in the work of the people's control and efforts must be made to have the Leninist ideas on constant and effective control by the broad masses unswervingly translated into life".¹

Even such a short summary of the history of state and public control in the USSR indicates the growing role of the people's masses in the construction of the new life, and the great importance of control as one of the forms of socialist democracy.

* * *

The very first decrees of the young Soviet Republic and its first steps in the field of social and economic changes tremendously influenced the progress of the proletarian revolutionary movement in all capitalist countries.

The working people in the capitalist countries followed the example of the working class of Russia and intensified their struggle for economic rights and for power. Councils (counterparts of Russia's Soviets) sprang up in Germany, Hungary, Austria, Poland, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Italy. The demands put forward by the advanced sections of the European proletariat for workers' control over production and the nationalisation of industry, were very popular among the masses.

The working people of Austria, for example, demanded the nationalisation of the banks, the mining and marketing of coal and iron ore, the iron-and-steel enterprises, etc. In some places they took over management of the enterprises.

The most important of the democratic victories gained by

¹ 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, p. 227.

the working class of Austria was the law on Production Councils drafted by the commission on socialisation, headed by Otto Bauer, and adopted in May 1919. Workers' production councils were also set up in a spontaneous fashion, under the influence of the October Revolution and the working class was persistent in its demand that these should be granted a legal status. Two other laws followed, one, on The Elections to the Production Councils, and the other, on The Competency and Activities of the Production Councils.⁴ In compliance with these laws, production councils were set up at all industrial, handicraft and trade enterprises employing of over twenty workers, and also at transport and communications enterprises.

The production councils were made responsible for a variety of problems: collective agreements, hire and discharge, work regulations, wages, financial documents, control over the implementation of social legislature, the activities of communal institutions and enterprises, and also, balance-of-payments sheets and financial calculation. They had the right to join the administration in discussing problems of management. The production councils were granted two places in the supervisory council of any joint-stock company with a fixed capital of over one million crowns.²

In Italy the revolutionary upheaval of 1919-21 was marked by the struggle for workers' control over production. In the summer of 1919 the workers of many enterprises began to elect shop commissars, later known as shop stewards. The campaign quickly spread throughout industry. The alliances formed amongst the plant and factory shop commissars brought into being the factory councils, the first organs of proletarian self-government and workers' control. They took over the administrative functions at many enterprises and "brought home to the divided workers' masses what the worker self-government in production means".³

In April 1920 the metal-workers of Turin went on strike. This was the first time that Italian strikers were to demand

⁴ W. Ellenbogen, *Sozialisierung in Österreich*, Wien, 1921, S. 18-19.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Opere di Antonio Gramsci. L'Ordine Nuovo (1919-1920)*, 1955, p. 184.

workers' control over production and they had behind them all the workers of the town and the province.

According to Gramsci, the specific feature of the large-scale activity, which was launched by the workers of Turin and had political as well as an economic character, was that "for the first time in history the proletariat began to fight for control over production, not motivated by hunger and unemployment; besides, it was a battle not of the minority, the forward detachment of the working class, but of all the workers of Turin. They waged the battle to the last, in spite of all the hardships and privation."¹

But in 1919-20 the workers did not succeed in establishing their control over production in the country as a whole. As Gramsci noted, "The entire might of the Italian capitalists was used to crush the campaign of the Turin workers; the bourgeois state placed all available means at their disposal..."²

Gradually, under pressure of the bourgeois reactionary forces and the general weakening of the revolutionary movement in Italy, the campaign lost its force. The Italian Communist Party, founded in January 1921, was too inexperienced to direct the class struggle of the proletariat.

The revolutionary events that took place in Europe between 1918 and 1923 successfully paralysed the forces of imperialism attempting to strangle Soviet Russia. These and subsequent events proved that in spite of the temporary defeat the proletariat regarded workers' control and revolutionary changes as the key to liberation from exploitation and the key to freedom and democracy.

¹ *Opere di Antonio Gramsci, L'Ordine Nuovo (1919-1920)*, pp. 176-77.

² *Ibid.*, p. 177.

THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIALIST CONTROL

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is engaged in organisational and educational work of gigantic scope aimed at actively involving all citizens in industrial and public life and helping them make full use of their rights. The Party spares no efforts in its attempts to expand socialist democracy, promote the role of the Soviets, the trade unions, the mass organisations of working people, and the organs of people's control.

In his work *The State and Revolution*, Lenin pointed out that "when *all* have learned to administer and actually do independently administer social production, independently keep accounts and exercise control over the parasites, the sons of the wealthy, the swindlers and other 'guardians of capitalist traditions', the escape from this popular accounting and control will inevitably become so incredibly difficult, such a rare exception, and will probably be accompanied by such swift and severe punishment (for the armed workers are practical men and not sentimental intellectuals, and they will scarcely allow anyone to trifle with them), that the necessity of observing the simple, fundamental rules of the community will very soon become a *habit*."¹

These are the purposes which the organs of people's control serve. They educate the people to be active builders of the communist society, to strictly adhere to the norms of the socialist community, and to be ready to place public above personal interests.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 474.

The Statute of the People's Control Organs in the USSR defines their role, sphere of activities, the principles of their organisation, the rights, responsibilities, and methods of their work in a socialist society. Here is a resumé of the Statute.

The tasks of the control committees, groups and sections are as follows:

To exercise regular control over the fulfilment of state plans and assignments;

To search actively for the latent potential of the economy, to ensure greater efficiency of production, the thrifty use of materials and finances and the introduction of progressive techniques;

To wage a vigorous fight against violations of state discipline, against parochialism, mismanagement, extravagance, deception, and encroachments on socialist property;

To put a stop to bureaucracy and red tape, to improve the work of state bodies, reduce expenditures, implement scientific methods of labour and management, and efficient departmental control.

It follows that people's controllers in a socialist society are neither prosecutors of evils and shortcomings nor administrators with punitive functions; they are the sentinels and guards of the people. They actively help the Communist Party and the people's government in overcoming the difficulties in the fields of politics, economy and culture; and they mobilise the masses for the successful solution of the problems facing the country.

The governing principle of the socialist community is *democratic centralism*, the essence of which is the inviolable combination of democracy: the sovereignty of the people, their initiative, the selection of the leading bodies by election and their responsibility to the masses with centralism: central administration, submission of the minority to the majority, one-man management, and strict discipline.

The principle was first put into practice by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in the creation of the Communist League, and later, the First International. Democratic centralism was the cornerstone of the proletarian Party in Russia and it has remained the basic principle of the organisation and the activities of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of all the other Communist and Workers' Parties.

The consolidation of Soviet power and the success achieved in the building of socialism strengthened the application of democratic centralism to the management of the state, of the economic and moral affairs of society. This principle envisages the centralised management of economy on the one hand and the economic independence of enterprises and the development of their initiative on the other; one-man management of production, and joint leadership in the solution of basic problems and the broad initiative of the masses.

Democratic centralism reflects the essence of socialism; it is based on objective factors. The economic foundation of democratic centralism is the socialist ownership of the means of production. The socialist ownership of the means of production puts an end to economic crises and to the anarchy of production; it brings to life the law of planned and balanced development. The social and political basis of democratic centralism is the absence of antagonistic classes; and the unity of the will and the interests of the entire society. The moral basis of democratic centralism is the supremacy of socialist ideology and the ideological unity of society.

Thus, ensuring unity in all spheres of public life, democratic centralism "presupposes the possibility, created for the first time in history, of a full and unhampered development not only of specific local features, but also of local inventiveness, local initiative, of diverse ways, methods and means of progress to the common goal".¹

Lenin explained that democratic centralism assumes a combination of firm leadership of the lower by the higher bodies, compulsory execution of directives from the centre by the local organs but independent decision-making on local issues. He stressed that those who relied on the conventional patterns of activity, were prey to formalism and failed to take personal responsibility in management were not to be tolerated; he insisted that the local organs should be given more responsibility and be granted greater initiative.

Only such a principle permits the socialist state to concentrate and utilise, in the most effective way and in the interests of the people, all the available resources, and

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 208.

ensures both the steady development of the country as a whole and the progress of its various regions with all their differences. Lenin wrote: "Agriculture in Kaluga Gubernia differs from that in Kazan Gubernia. The same thing can be said about industry; and it can be said about administration, or management, as a whole. Failure to make allowances for local differences in all these matters would mean slipping into bureaucratic centralism, and so forth. It would mean preventing the local authorities from giving proper consideration to specific local features, which is the basis of all rational administration."¹

The Communist Party opposes not only all bureaucratic distortions of centralism, but also parochialism. Both impede successful administration of state and economic affairs.

Socialist economy is an entity, and thus if one enterprise ceases to run smoothly this inevitably affects all the other enterprises. If but one factory fails to fulfil the plan of co-operated deliveries this generates a kind of a chain reaction. That is why we cannot tolerate violators of state discipline or people who look upon the enterprise or organisation they head as their own patrimonial estate where they are free to act as they please.

In the Soviet Union, as in the other socialist countries, the state wants every town and village, every district and region to have fine residential facilities, good roads, schools, hospitals, bath-houses and other facilities. The state allocates considerable sums for this purpose, but not, of course, those funds marked out for investment in the branches of economy important to the whole nation.

Local problems cannot be solved satisfactorily without the preliminary solution of national problems and thus a genuine interest in local requirements should be expressed as a readiness to guarantee the best possible fulfilment of state plans.

It is the task of public control to ensure and safeguard national interests because these interests are common to all towns, districts, regions and republics. Damage to state interests inevitably affects local interests. Therefore, lack of discipline or, say, slipshod fulfilment of obligations as regards co-operated deliveries, or diversion of funds for local

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 364.

needs is an expression of parochialism and an offence against the state. Attempts are made to put a stop to such activity since a narrow approach always leads to counterposing local interests, which means placing them above national interests.

The departmental approach and parochialism can manifest themselves in many ways. Some administrators, for instance, hoard raw materials and other goods, thereby freezing a large quantity of funds. They think that they are doing a good turn for their enterprise, but in reality they are depriving other enterprises of necessary material and preventing industry in general from fulfilling the state plan.

Instead of utilising the available reserves and practising economy some managers do all they can to get permission to consume above-quota quantities of electric power and raw material and take an extra labour force. Or they press for additional construction at their enterprise even though they have excess floorspace to start with and the existing equipment is not used as it might be.

Public controllers bring to light many incorrect practices. Here is an example. Once the manufacture of a certain product has been started, the management of an enterprise may be unwilling to introduce the latest scientific and engineering achievements. To conceal its conservatism, the management advances as an excuse its fear of falling back behind in the fulfilment of the production programme. It risks no additional expenses and does nothing by way of the necessary reorganisation. The management, to put it in a nutshell, is prepared to lag behind technologically if by that means it can escape trouble and difficulties.

There are many other ways in which the departmental and parochial approach finds expression. Some executives are so involved in their departmental interests that they fail to safeguard the general state interests and put a brake on specialisation and co-operation of production. Thus a factory might cling to its own foundry, no matter how obsolete it is, even though, from the economic viewpoint, it would be much better to operate one modern foundry to supply the needs of a whole town or industrial district.

Once during thorough inspection people's controllers unveiled activity that could almost be classed as criminal.

Statistic relating to the fulfilment of plans, had been falsified, material and goods had been concealed from the state, requirements of materials that were in short supply had been overstated and there had been attempts to secure understated plans. This was all done, presumably, in the interests of the enterprise; but such care for the enterprise's welfare has nothing in common with statesmanlike administration, and thus the offenders were severely punished.

These attitudes contradict the very essence of socialist economy. The public ownership of the means of production requires a definite co-ordination of work within the economic regions and the entire system of socialist production, and is not merely a question of co-ordination within the enterprise itself. Therefore, one of the most important tasks of control organs, trade-union organisations and of society in general is to bring to light and fight all parochial tendencies which run counter to the national interests.

The activity of people's controllers is characterised by their statesmanlike approach and their desire to utilise to the maximum all opportunities of raising the output of products. Here is one of the numerous examples that could be given to illustrate this point.

As is generally known economic plans in a socialist society are drafted and discussed by millions of people, as well as by the special departments. The people's controllers also take part in this important work, helping the planning agencies at the draft stage by uncovering unexploited economic reserves.

The controllers scrupulously study calculations, estimates and economic statistics, compare this data with the results of their inspections, and hold discussions with specialists, workers and collective farmers. All this done, they table the so-called counterproposals.

In 1970, for example, the People's Control Committee of the USSR submitted to the USSR State Planning Committee a well-grounded proposal to increase the output by a 1,300 million rubles' worth of consumer and certain other goods. The proposal was readily accepted.

Its mass character is one of the basic principles of people's control. Its strength lies in the workers, collective farmers and office employees who voluntarily serve in the sections,

groups, and committees of people's control, check the execution of the directives issued by the Communist Party and the Government, and help to implement them.

Control exercised by the producers of society's material wealth is only possible under socialism. As soon as the proletariat took over the reins of government it had to solve the problem of thrifty, economical management and controlling and accounting of the entire national property. In his appeal to workers and peasants Lenin wrote: "You yourselves must set to work to take account of and control the production and distribution of products—this, and this alone is the road to the victory of socialism, the only guarantee of its victory, the guarantee of victory over all exploitation, over all poverty and want!"¹

More than eight million people are engaged in the work of control groups or work as public inspectors on the people's control committees. In addition the control agencies are assisted by three million Komsomol members and active trade-union members. This is a clear proof that control in the USSR involves all the people.

The growing number of control sections and groups is further evidence that Lenin's principle of mass work has really been implemented. In Moscow, at the beginning of 1971, for example, there were more than 40,000 groups and sections. They involved nearly 240,000 people.

The city and district committees of people's control are assisted in Moscow by 300 departments, commissions and sectors which are staffed by more than 4,000 voluntary workers, specialists from the various branches of the economy and pensioners; 27 per cent of the inspectors are women.

But besides the voluntary inspectors, the organs of people's control, which work jointly with the standing commissions of Soviets, trade-union public controllers and Komsomol Searchlight teams, mobilise hundreds of thousands of people for mass inspections, spot-checks and surveys. In Moscow, for example, more than 1.5 million people took part in the thrift and economy campaign.

By taking part in these activities, the Soviet people learn to manage public, economic and state affairs. Such is the

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 411.

educational function of people's control. It encourages every citizen to feel a sense of responsibility for the affairs of the whole society.

The rules of establishing groups and sections of people's control are such that the principles of mass work are developed and millions of Soviet people are educated.

The groups and sections are elected for two-year terms. This gives sufficient time to learn the principles of control, the methods of analysing the different aspects of the work of this or that collective and the manner in which shortcomings are discovered and eliminated.

Every two years the groups and sections are replenished by new people who also learn the qualities of efficient management and service to the people. This is in line with the Party's policy of involving all people *without exception* in control work.

Those who write letters, make statements or suggestions or come personally to control sections and groups also play a useful role. This form of action is widespread: approximately 1.5 million people apply to control bodies every year. In 1969 the organs of people's control in Moscow examined more than 21,000 letters, and interviewed over 10,000 people.

The cases brought up are rarely personal matters. The letters speak of unexploited economic resources, suggest innovations, relating to the elimination of excess expenses, the improvement of the work of economic bodies and state apparatus, etc. Some of the proposals are very valuable, and help to improve economic efficiency and the conditions of work and of life in general.

Some time ago the Moscow City Committee of People's Control received a number of warnings pointing to the unsatisfactory work of a dry-cleaning enterprise. The inspection that followed unveiled many serious shortcomings and negligence on the part of the management. The offenders were reprimanded and the Committee mapped out a series of measures for eliminating the shortcomings. A few months later the inspection was repeated. It was found that the management had repaired 12 reception stations, commissioned 18 units of new equipment, etc. All this considerably improved the services offered to the public. The number of complaints fell drastically.

This careful examination of letters and submitted information is not aimed simply at the solution of some concrete albeit very urgent problems. The main purpose of this work is education. The worker or office employee who applies to an organ of people's control and meets there with an understanding of his position begins to realise his rights and his role in society. He becomes an active fighter against negligence, extravagance and irresponsibility. He feels himself the real master of the land. Thus it is the sacred duty of every people's controller to take heed of letters, suggestions and critical remarks.

The mass participation of workers, collective farmers, office employees and specialists in the work of control committees helps not only to bring to light and eliminate the negligence of officials or organisations, but also to *prevent* the mistakes, failures, errors, offences and even crimes that might occur. This is a very valuable service.

Part of the work of the Soviet administrative and judicial organs and the investigation agencies consist of persistent crime-preventive work. The same is true of the people's control; here the emphasis is not so much on punishing and reprimanding the offenders, but on educating and convincing people and anticipating the slightest violation of state discipline and socialist law.

Thus, mass work, attention to the warnings and suggestions submitted by the people and crime-prevention are the primary duties of people's control.

It would be wrong to claim, however, that these duties are performed adequately by every control organ. Mistakes are inevitable when the work is being carried out on such a large scale. Some committees fail to enlist the services of the public and their ties with groups and sections of people's control are weak. Inspections are sometimes made only by staff officials, and there are cases where the emphasis is on the discovery of shortcomings and the passing of a decision on this subject, while the necessary check to make sure the decision is implemented is neglected.

The Communist Party helps the people's control to get rid of these and other obstacles. It uncovers the mistakes and teaches the committees to work creatively, relying on the broad masses of the people.

A characteristic feature of the organs of people's control is that they combine the functions of state and public control.

The people's control committees resemble state organs in many ways, above all, in the manner of their establishment. The committees are created by the USSR Council of Ministers, the Councils of Ministers of the republics or the local Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

The committees are provided with the authority and power to perform their control functions. The committees, acting on behalf of the state, have the right to call offenders to account, reprimand them, relieve them from their posts, bring lawsuits, rescind unlawful orders and acts, order the elimination of shortcomings and violations, etc.

The public relations which evolve in the course of the activity of people's control organs are governed by Soviet law. The committees' decisions have juridical power and have to be obeyed by all the organisations and people whom they concern.

The committees of people's control are financed by the state budget, i.e., as regards finance they are thus considered state organisations.

Another feature common to the committees and state administrative organs is the employment of paid full-time staff. But the wide participation of the people in the work of the control committees brings them closer to public organisations.

The system of people's control includes, as we said, sections and groups of control, whose members do their work on a non-paid basis. It is their public work, a duty of honour.

It is clear, therefore, that the organs of people's control in the USSR are of a specific kind. They combine the principles of state and public organisation and in composition and the methods of their formation and activity they are genuine organs of the people.

This is the point at which they differ from the inspection bodies in bourgeois society where control is exercised only by the state apparatus and then only in the interests of the exploiter classes. In tsarist Russia, for example, the department of state inspection employed over 10,000 high-ranking officials who ardently promoted the interests of landowners and capitalists. The leading positions in the state inspection system were held by Baron Kampenhausen, Count Panin,

Prince Shakhovskoi and other representatives of the ruling classes.

The genuinely democratic nature of control in the USSR is manifest in the composition of the People's Control Committee of the USSR. The Committee members include V. Smirnov, Hero of Socialist Labour, a team-leader of ship-builders at the Baltic Shipyards in Leningrad; L. Lyubchenko, deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, chairman of the Bolshevik Collective Farm in Zhitomir Region; A. Egle, a merited specialist of the VEF Radio Factory in Riga.

S. Kotova, Hero of Socialist Labour, deputy chief engineer of the Kalinin Spinning Mill; S. Soyuzov, Hero of Socialist Labour, fitter of the Kuntsevo Engineering Plant; S. Matveyev, Hero of Socialist Labour, director of Watch Factory No. 1; Y. Kolotytsky, corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences; V. Ilyin, secretary of the Moscow Writers' Union, are among the members of the Moscow City Committee of People's Control.

Thousands of people with splendid records of service both at their work and in the public and political sphere are engaged in the activity of different control organs, ranging from the various sections and groups to the People's Control Committee of the USSR.

One must have the moral right to control, correct and instruct others. The Rules of People's Control Organs in the USSR therefore make quite clear what is demanded of a controller. It is his duty to continuously take an interest in safeguarding and increasing national property, and to be an example of hard-work, efficiency and discipline; he must demand a lot of himself, and be principled and irreconcilable when it comes to defending state and public interests.

This control work is not a job. It is done by lathe-operators, shop assistants, designers and by each person who joins his workmates in actively solving the general problems of his enterprise and the problems facing the whole country.

This is the spirit in which Antonina Guskova, a mother with two children, understands her duty. Guskova has been working for the past 20 years as a cutter at a knitwear factory in Moscow.

Her workmates say with a smile that she is "boss" in the workshop. Antonina really cares for the good name of her

enterprise. That was why she was one of the first to be named as candidate during the elections to the people's control section and the elected controllers chose her for their chief.

"Nothing can be too trifling for us in our work," says Antonina Guskova. "Everybody knows that little things lead to bigger. So one has to notice the little things, and appreciate their significance."

Guskova told us about one of the sort of episodes that is always cropping up.

The ends left over after cutting cloth for gloves might at first glance seem only good for waste.

"But why not make children's mittens out of them?" Antonina Guskova suggested.

There was nothing particularly remarkable or ingenious about her suggestion, though many asked themselves why they hadn't thought of it earlier. So the amount of waste has been reduced to the minimum; the factory has increased its profits, and the mittens are in great demand.

"It's hardly surprising that we try to save materials and improve the quality of our goods," Antonina remarked. "Everything that we manufacture is designed for the people, for our own selves. I buy our mittens for my granddaughter. She is proud, you know, that her mittens are made at the factory where her grandmother works."

Ivan Benyukh is well known in Novokuznetsk and probably throughout the whole of Kemerovo Region. He is respected for his hard work and his honesty, his consideration for people, and knowledge of life and for his persistent and uncompromising struggle against all shortcomings. His authority is high, particularly with those builders with whom he has worked for many years and who know everything about his interesting, and at times difficult life.

Ivan Benyukh had already passed through many hard times even before he took part during the first five-year plans in building the Kuznetsk Iron-and-Steel Works. He nevertheless managed to study in his spare moment. When the war broke out in 1941, he joined the army and went to the front. After the war he returned to his native Novokuznetsk and started working again on important building-schemes that included a concrete factory, the coke batteries of the West

Siberian Iron-and-Steel Plant, and the construction of residential blocks.

The time came for Ivan Benyukh to retire, but he did not want to break with his life of hard work and public service. So he joined the army of people's controllers on a non-paid basis and found that the work suited him. Ivan Benyukh can be seen back on the construction sites side by side with his former workmates; he shares their joys and worries, and he takes their work to heart. Ivan Benyukh passes on his experience and knowledge to others, and spares no effort in showing people how to live and work better.

These are examples of voluntary workers. But there are staff workers, too. They act as chairmen of district people's control committees, chairmen and officials of regional, territorial and republican committees, or they sit on the People's Control Committee of the USSR. The staff workers are not numerous—less than a tenth of one per cent of the total number of people's controllers for the whole of the Soviet Union.

Who are the staff officials?

There are no special educational establishments for training people's controllers, and these posts are filled by engineers, economists, directors of enterprises, officials of local administrations, etc. The chief officials are chosen from among the most advanced workers and collective farmers who show particular initiative.

The chairman of the Oktyabrsky district committee of people's control, Vasily Moiseyev, is a well-known figure in Moscow. He was born about 50 years ago into a peasant family. In his youth he worked in agriculture and after fighting in the war returned to his native Tambov Region to resume his job on a collective farm. In 1954 he moved to Moscow and started to work as a machine-operator at a thermoelectric power station, where he stayed for almost 15 years; he worked very hard and also improved his qualifications. Moiseyev's industry was appreciated, and he was awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour. In 1968 the deputies of the Oktyabrsky District Soviet elected him chairman of the district committee of people's control. Thus Vasily Moiseyev, an ordinary worker, took charge of a several-thousand-strong army of people's controllers. That is what he says about his work:

"At one committee meeting we discussed the work of the Second Car Repair Plant. Many drivers were sceptical about the repairs done at the enterprise. And not without reason. Here are just two of the cases that came up during discussion. The plant sent a taxi back into service after a complete overhaul. It looked brand new, but after running 747 kilometres it broke down, and was taken for more repair. Another car broke down even sooner. That was the plant's idea of overhaul!"

The commission sent to look into the matter with the people's control group of the plant discovered that bad-quality spare parts, violation of specifications and shortage of testing instruments were the reasons behind the unsatisfactory work. No accounts were kept of losses rising from bad production. The district committee of people's control punished the offenders.

"But I don't want to emphasise the machines and the technological side," Moiseyev went on to say. "I would rather talk about people and their attitude to work. The quality of car repair work in the case in point does not depend exclusively on the director and the chief engineer whom we reprimanded. Workmanship depends on all members of the collective, and if they value their good name and the good name of their factory, they must all act as people's controllers."

"Every Muscovite, irrespective of his place of work, be it in a factory, construction site or research institute, is in the broad sense of the word a people's controller. During the same committee meeting I mentioned we discussed the shortage of measuring and testing instruments. But the best instrument, you must agree, will be useless if the man who handles it does not consider himself a people's controller. The workman who put faulty parts in the car and violated the specifications, hoping that it would pass unnoticed, lacked a sense of responsibility and an understanding of control."

"People who remember me working at the power station occasionally come up to me and ask: why is your station sending up clouds of heavy black smoke? I won't go into detail, but I will say that from my own experience part of the fault rests with the operator. The director, the chief engineer

and all the other leading specialists are, naturally, also responsible, but the blame must be mainly with the operator.

"People who know the modern thermoelectric power station are aware how much depends on the automation and the control instruments. Every emergency may apparently have been taken into account and provided for, but if the operator loses concentration even for a moment he causes huge clouds of black smoke above the station. The gas and heat, representing people's money, are blown to the winds."

"What qualities are the best operators, such as my former workmates, Yekaterina Dronova and Ivan Skotnikov noted for? In the boiler-room their concentration never wavers, they never forget that they are supplying heat for the population and always look for ways of saving fuel. They could most certainly be called people's controllers even though they are not members of the special groups."

"Recently we have singled out a number of people's controllers for their good work. B. Yegorov, a pattern-maker, Z. Kondratyeva, deputy chief of the technical control bureau, and V. Ponomarenko, Doctor of Sciences (Chemistry). What is the secret of their success? The answer is that they and the other real activists are genuine people's controllers who by their example encourage others to develop a sense of responsibility. People's controller is not a title, it makes him morally responsible to himself and his comrades."

The Communist Party and the people's control committees constantly educate the activists in these high moral qualities, and show how shortcomings can be uncovered and eliminated.

Controllers learn this art mainly through their practical work, but the courses held in the so-called people's universities, schools and departments run on a voluntary non-paid basis are also very helpful.

The network of such educational establishments covers the whole country. They function in towns and other large urban settlements, and at almost all enterprises, institutions, collective and state farms.

The programmes and curricula are worked out locally taking into account the specific nature and concrete tasks of the collective in question. But they have a single aim: to give their listeners a basic understanding of efficient control work.

The main subjects for study include economies, finances, planning, cost accounting, labour organisation and rate setting, accounting and book-keeping. The lectures delivered by scientists, economists, administrators, finance experts, leading officials of ministries, executive councils of Soviets of Working People's Deputies, Party and trade-union committees cover a great variety of subjects.

The listeners are interested above all in such subjects as the modern scientific and technological revolution, scientific principles of managing socialist production, the fundamentals of Soviet law, methods of raising the efficiency of labour and production, the way the Soviet state apparatus works, information and its role in influencing the organs of power and controlling their activities, the history of the evolution of people's control in the USSR and the other socialist countries, the law and the citizen, the socialist way of life, the rising standard of living of the Soviet people, and the development of socialist democracy.

Besides the lectures there are seminars for creative exchange of experience, the study of forms and methods applying to the work of control committees, groups and sections, the methods of control activities, and the principles of publicising control work and of making it efficient.

Such an education raises the qualification of a controller, develops initiative and enables him to carry out investigations in depth and with success.

Particular attention is being paid at the moment to economic questions, especially those connected with uncovering ways of raising labour productivity. This is one of the most important problems facing the country. In the period from 1971 to 1975 the Soviet Union's national income will be increased by 37 or 40 per cent: approximately 80 or 85 per cent of this increase will result from higher labour productivity.

It is not difficult to understand the tremendous importance of improving the situation in this field even by just one per cent. Such a step forward could result, for instance, in an additional million square metres of housing accommodations which is equivalent to building a town for 100,000 inhabitants. In terms of other figures, the one per cent increase in labour productivity would mean:

7,000 million kilowatt-hours of electricity;
85 million square metres of fabrics;
6 million pairs of shoes;
66,000 TV sets;
37,000 refrigerators;
5,000 lorries;
3,000 cars;
1 million tons of steel;
6 million tons of coal;
3 million tons of oil;
4,000 tractors.

This, it must be emphasised, is the effect of just one per cent increase in labour productivity. All enterprises have these unexploited reserves, and the people's controllers are doing their best to uncover them.

Control is not limited to checking up, it is the ability to right what has gone wrong. Lenin wrote:

"It is more the duty of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection to *be able to improve* things than to merely 'detect' and 'expose'."¹

The *effectiveness* of control, its success in helping to mobilise the human energy and the physical means for fulfilling state plans, in strengthening discipline, and winning the struggle against mismanagement and waste, can only be judged from the final results. And those depend largely on the keeping up with daily events in the organisations under control.

Therefore the committees must maintain regular contacts with the groups of people's control working within the enterprises and organisations; they must be provided with the systematic information that serves to improve the methods of management. Any question put before control organs should be carefully analysed, examining and assessing all the facts.

As Lenin said, "We must seek to build a reliable foundation of precise and indisputable facts.... And if it is to be a real foundation, we must take not individual facts, but the *sum total* of facts, without a single exception, relating to the question under discussion."²

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 42.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, p. 272.

Results are best when the control committee carries out the investigation and sets about the elimination of shortcomings working jointly with the chiefs and groups of people's control at the enterprise in question. V. Kuibyshev, one of the chiefs of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, made an interesting remark on this point: "We are trying to take a road which is not contributing to our popularity, but which is essentially the correct one: we are trying to eliminate the shortcomings with the help of the head of the economic organisation in question. We do not hide the shortcomings in our secret files; we make them known to the head of the organisation in question and together with him we eliminate them. This work is hardly visible to the outside world, and it is very difficult to sum it up. A high percentage of our activities, however, is taken up by this work."¹

This is exactly the way the organs of people's control work. They see their main task as helping the heads of economic organisations and working with them jointly in an effort to improve the situation rather than acting as overseers.

The principle of collectivity is behind all the activities of the organs of people's control. The committees regularly discuss and adopt decisions on the most important questions that arise; they examine the results of check-ups and hear reports on the elimination of shortcomings. A committee's chairman has no right to sign resolutions unless they have been discussed by the members of the committee and approved by the majority. The members of people's control groups draft their plans and discuss the results of investigations collectively. Decisions are taken only after all points of view have been put forward and seriously debated. Everybody makes a frank statement of his viewpoint, and thereby contributes to the matter in hand.

The principle of collectivity also implies however a personal responsibility for any assignment. Lenin wrote: "Indefatigable efforts must be made to ensure that ... everyone

¹ V. V. Kuibyshev, *The Tasks of the Central Control Commission and WPI*, (Russ. ed.) published by the Sverdlov Communist University, 1924, p. 23.

is held *personally* responsible for a definite, strictly and precisely defined job or part of a job."¹

The combination of collective and personal responsibility is an effective means of educating the people's controllers to act only as their principles dictate whatever question they are examining.

The analysis of the work of organisations or executive officials from the viewpoint of existing legislature is an indispensable element of control. Since control involves broad sections of the public, the question of the ability to uncover violations of the law and of the rules of a socialist community acquires great significance. Propaganda of juridical knowledge plays an important role in this.

Publicity is an indispensable condition for successful work. The organs of people's control work openly, in public view. The results of checks and inspections are made known not only to the collective of the enterprise or organisation in question, but throughout the entire district and region and in some cases throughout the whole country. Publicity is one of the most effective means of cautioning others against the same mistakes and blunders. It raises the authority of people's control and the activity of the masses. Publicity imbues millions of people with the conviction that any shortcoming obstructing the successful development of Soviet society can be eliminated.

Publicity is provided by such powerful media as the press, radio and television. Every newspaper regularly prints People's Control Page; many towns, enterprises, construction sites and organisations have set up people's control stands and print special bulletins. There are public photostudios where the so-called photo-accusations are produced. The controllers also address public meetings, radio and TV audiences.

The organs of people's control employ various forms of publicity to anticipate shortcomings and to set public opinion against those whose wrong doings threaten the interests of Soviet society.

Because of its close contacts with the local Soviets of Working People's Deputies and trade-union organisations

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 142.

publicity can have a very powerful effect. The following story from Moscow's Lenin District is an example of the links which control organisations have established with the local authorities.

The district Soviet of Working People's Deputies numbers 300 deputies and an army of 14,000 people's control activists. In 1970 the district Soviet asked the controllers to arrange 150 mass check-ups covering trade, public catering, medical and communal services, housing repairs, etc. The Soviet discussed the results of 12 of these check-ups and the relevant resolutions were made public.

Check-ups undertaken jointly by people's controllers and the deputies' standing committees and their activists are now more frequent. Discussions on the findings which are also held jointly are attended by the officials guilty of serious omissions, violations of legislative norms, or an irresponsible attitude to the needs of the working people. The adopted measures are always made known publicly and people thus have the opportunity to check the implementation of these decisions and can say whether or not sufficient has been done.

In 1968 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued a decree On the Procedure of Examining Suggestions, Notices and Complaints from Citizens. It is hard to overestimate the significance of such a democratic act passed by the supreme organ of power in a country which cares first and foremost for the individual human being. The Soviet state is a people's state, and attention to the needs and requirements of the people is the most important principle underlying its activity.

That is why the deputies of the Lenin District Soviet and the people's controllers jointly check the implementation of the decree demanding an understanding attitude towards people, their notices and complaints. Between January and April 1971 they checked the implementation of the decree at 137 enterprises and informed the population of the district of the results.

Here is another example of how publicity works and of the mass nature of control work.

The big conference hall of the Moscow City Soviet of Working People's Deputies was full to overflowing. The

members of the Soviet's executive committee were discussing the question of public catering in the city's industrial enterprises.

There is no need to go into the report and the speeches in detail. Much has been done and is being done to provide cheap, fine and nourishing food in the canteens and snack-bars of the capital city's plants and factories. Such a complicated network, including more than 1,500 canteens and snack-bars, is bound to have its shortcomings. The meeting dwelt on this negative side and on the unsolved problems. This, to put it briefly, was a detailed and businesslike discussion of matters that concern the interests of hundreds of thousands of people.

All those who attended the session knew the work that had been undertaken prior to the discussion. Long before the session the committees of people's control and the trade-union organisations had made a mass investigation into the communal services, and primarily the public catering, in plants and factories.

The results were examined by the City Committee of People's Control and the City Council of Trade Unions. Then the topic was placed on the agenda of the Moscow Soviet of Working People's Deputies. One can imagine how many thousands of people were involved in examining the question, interviewing the customers, studying their complaints and suggestions, and working out proposals. This was a real expression of the mass, collective and public nature of control.

It should be noted that such methods heighten a person's feeling of responsibility for the job assigned to him. There is no hiding away from the people, the saying goes. Once you are trusted with a job, be it great or small, it is your duty to work honestly and carefully; you must work with a will in order to justify the trust the people have in you. If you fail in this, then face the people. The Communist Party makes this demand of everybody. This is the way Lenin acted.

Resolutely fighting all negligence, inefficiency and irresponsibility, Lenin never made concessions for the sake of establishing good and comradely relations with people he had entrusted with a certain business. He would not stand

violations of discipline and demanded that offenders, irrespective of their rank, be called to account.

In 1921, A. Badayev, Chairman of the Moscow Consumer Commune, failed to implement the decisions of the Council of Labour and Defence in time. He was severely reprimanded. But Lenin, though he knew the veteran Bolshevik well, considered the reprimand to be insufficient, and in a note dated July 23, 1921, he wrote:

"To put the following proposals through the Political Bureau and the Council of Labour and Defence:

"1) to punish Badayev and two of his closest associates by putting them *under arrest* for one Sunday for failure to fulfil the order of the CLD;

"2) to warn him and them that the next time they will be taken into custody for a *whole month* and then dismissed."¹

Lenin was against secret or private examinations of offences, even if the case concerned high-ranking officials. He demanded that errors be criticised and condemned in public. "From the standpoint of principle it is essential not to leave such matters within the confines of bureaucratic institutions, but to bring them out into the public court—not so much for the sake of inflicting strict punishment (perhaps a reprimand will suffice), but for the sake of publicity and for dispelling the universal conviction that guilty persons are not punished."²

It is interesting to note that Lenin considered as guilty not only the official who failed to carry out a personal instruction, but also the head of the organisation who turned a blind eye to this negligence thus causing the organisation in question to suffer. Such high demands encourage the state officials to take greater responsibility for the uninterrupted execution of all orders from above by all concerned.

The Communist Party educates all Soviet people in these precious Leninist qualities.

In working out measures to improve the structure of management and develop the principles of people's control, the Communist Party is trying to arrange matters so that appointed people are entirely responsible for a piece of work.

¹ *Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*, p. 292.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 555.

Underlying the importance of this demand as regards leading officials, Leonid Brezhnev said at the 24th Congress of the CPSU: "When a decision is taken it must be made perfectly clear who is responsible for it. Similarly, it must be made clear who is responsible when a decision that is ripe for adoption is not adopted or is delayed. It is important to define at every level of management the volume and the balance of rights and responsibility."¹

It is no secret that some officials not wanting to "offend" a higher official by independent initiative are afraid of taking decisions and thus adopt the bureaucratic habit of securing approval even on the most simple matters. Some do it because of servility and toadyism, others because they have misunderstood the meaning of subordination, and have a misconceived idea of their rights and duties.

There are still cases of discipline violations in the administrative apparatus. These primarily concern failure to fulfill contract commitments on the part of an enterprise. There are examples of misuse of finance and materials, including natural resources. Sometimes managing bodies issue unlawful instructions and orders which go beyond the limits of their authority. Some administrators violate labour laws. It is not unknown for people to be late for work, or to pass part of the day in idleness; there are instances of bureaucratism, red-tape and neglect of duties.

The Report of the Central Committee to the 24th Congress of the CPSU states that "the successful realisation of the tasks facing us presupposes the precise and efficient work of the *state apparatus*. Hence the increased demands made on the administrative apparatus. The introduction of modern means and methods of administration begun in recent years, creates the condition for a more rational organisation of the administrative apparatus, for cutting its operational costs and reducing its personnel. Steps have already been taken in this direction and they shall be continued."²

Public control over the work of the administrative apparatus raises the officials' sense of responsibility. These high standards play a great role in preventing offenders from

¹ *24th Congress of the CPSU*, Moscow, 1971, p. 82.

² *Ibid.*, p. 94.

repeating their errors and warning others against making these same mistakes.

Bringing offenders to account is education not only for the person in question but for the other members of society. Citizens begin to feel certain that any managing official who carries out his duties superficially, who ignores the interests of the people or who uses his position to satisfy his own, selfish ends, will inevitably be punished. This confidence raises citizens' participation in public activity.

Lenin saw its inevitability as one of the educational aspects of punishment. "It has long been held that the preventive significance of punishment is not in its severity, but in its inevitableness. What is important is not that a crime shall be severely punished, but that *not a single* crime shall pass undiscovered."¹

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 398-99.

CHAPTER 4

MASS SCHOOLS OF MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

The scope of management in socialist society expands with every year as the number of economic and other projects increase and become more complicated. The factors that have to be considered before taking appropriate decisions multiply, and thus the flow of various kinds of information has to be stepped up. This applies not only to economic and industrial management, but also to the management of social and cultural construction, the development of science, of the arts and of other fields of public life.

It is clear that the professional managerial workers are powerless to solve these complicated questions without outside assistance. This is why the typical feature of socialism—the increasing participation of the masses in management—is continuously enlarging its scope. Public organisations are taking greater part in legislation, in the drafting of economic plans, in the control over the implementation of laws, and in safeguarding citizens' rights and interests.

The principle of the participation of the people's masses in management is inherent in the nature of the Soviet socialist state.

"The substance of Soviet government," Lenin wrote, "is that the permanent and only foundation of state power, the entire machinery of state, is the mass-scale organisation of the classes oppressed by capitalism. . . . It is the people, who even in the most democratic bourgeois republics . . . have in

fact been debarred by thousands of devices and subterfuges from participation in political life and enjoyment of democratic rights and liberties, that are now drawn into constant and unflinching, moreover, decisive, participation in the democratic administration of the state."¹

The main channels through which the *masses are drawn into the management of state affairs* are as follows:

The nation-wide elections to the organs of central and local power and to the people's courts;

Participation in the activities of the organs of state power through the deputies to the Supreme and local Soviets, and courts through the judges, people's assessors and members of courts of comrades;

The nation-wide discussion of important social and political measures;

Participation in the work of mass public organisations and various collective advisory organs of the state administration;

The occasional meetings and conferences of representatives from the different branches of the economy, of culture, and of science, etc.;

Participation in the work of trade unions, Komsomol, people's control, voluntary societies and other mass organisations of working people;

Participation in socialist emulation, rationalisation and in the direct management of production.

In view of the growing complexity of management in the various spheres of state and public activities it is essential that the increasing specialisation of management is combined with the participation of the broad masses.

It is clear that not every citizen is able to decide the special questions of state administration, some of which are so complex that they raise discussion even among highly qualified specialists. It is, therefore, necessary to instruct the working people in the art of administration and to find the most effective forms of engaging them in control work.

When we speak about the participation of all citizens in the management of the socialist state we do not mean that they all participate in administering state affairs at one and

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 465.

the same time. The most important thing is to place all aspects of management under the people's control and to draw all citizens in one way or another into exercising democratic control.

At the same time there should be no interference in administrative processes which require firm one-man management and personal responsibility. If we were to ignore this, we would, under the cover of talk about collectivity and democracy, weaken the position of chief executives and foster negligence, despotism, anarchic tendencies, and irresponsibility. That is why the Communist Party strictly follows Lenin's advice: "The more resolutely we now have to stand for a ruthlessly firm government, for the dictatorship of individuals in definite processes of work, in definite aspects of purely executive functions, the more varied must be the forms and methods of control from below in order to counteract every shadow of a possibility of distorting the principles of Soviet government, in order repeatedly and tirelessly to weed out bureaucracy."¹

This task is being solved thanks to the well organised mass check-ups on the implementation of laws, of Communist Party directives and of the decisions and instructions issued by the organs of people's power.

Lenin underlined the indissoluble connection between administration and management checking up that jobs were done. He believed that the real task of administration was not to issue directives, but to make sure that directives were executed. "*To test men and verify what has actually been done*—this, this again, this alone is now the main feature of all our activities, of our whole policy."²

The failure to check up on what has been done makes for an atmosphere of irresponsibility and negligence and prevents a correct assessment of the merits and negative sides of this or that organ of management and its staff. Absence of control spoils people; some officials, fearing no reprimands, begin handing out empty promises and assurances. As has often been noted fine leaders and officials begin to slip when there is no control.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 275.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 33, p. 226.

That is why Soviet society pays such particular attention to the examination of concrete achievements. This process, moreover, begins immediately the decision has been approved and not when some unfortunate clause becomes apparent or when the work comes up against difficulties or has almost entirely fallen apart. The whole purpose of check-ups is to ensure that assignments are executed accurately and uncover and eliminate shortcomings when they are in the embryo stage.

In the Soviet Union it is naturally the Communist Party that takes the greatest responsibility for the organisation of people's control and mass inspection.

After the final victory of socialism in the Soviet Union the Communist Party, which had been founded as the vanguard of the advanced, organised and conscious sections of the working class, took up its position at the head of the entire people. The Party exists for the people and serves the people. It is the highest form of social and political organisation, the leading and guiding force of Soviet society. The Communist Party directs the people's creative work, and gives an organised, planned and scientific direction to the people's struggle for the final disappearance of the old system and the victory of communism.

Speaking about the necessity of a persistent struggle against the forces and traditions of the old society, Lenin underlined that "the force of habit in millions and tens of millions is a most formidable force. Without a party of iron that has been tempered in the struggle, a party enjoying the confidence of all honest people in the class in question, a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses, such a struggle cannot be waged successfully."¹

The CPSU is such a party that can carry out this important work, organise and guide public control.

The most extensive powers of control belong to the highest organs of the Communist Party, including the nationwide Party congresses, Party congresses of the Union republics, and plenary meetings of the CPSU Central Committee and Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the

Union republics. The CPSU Central Committee has set up the Committee of Party Control which sees to it that Communists are adhering to Party and state discipline.

Control functions are also exercised by territorial, regional, city, district and primary Party organisations. They are involved in daily checking the progress of activity, and in this work they rely on non-Party people as well.

The primary Party organisations at industrial and trade enterprises, collective and state farms have the *right to control the work of the management*. The 24th Congress of the Communist Party has extended this right to the primary Party organisations in all design bureaus and organisations, research institutions, educational and medical establishments and other organisations where the functions of the management do not overstep the boundaries of the collectives in question. The importance of this step can be judged from the fact that 160,000 primary Party organisations with 4 million Communists are involved. Now they have an opportunity to influence more actively the work of their institutions, organisations and departments.

The 24th Congress pointed out that it was the job of the Party organisations of the central and local Soviets and the various economic institutions and departments to see that the managing apparatus executed the directives of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government and observed Soviet laws.

Control over management implies the right of the primary Party organisations to acquaint themselves with the reports and other materials concerning the running of enterprises, departments or organisations as a whole or of their different sections. The primary Party organisation has the right and is in fact obliged to hear the reports of managing officials at Party meetings, in the Party bureaux and the Party committees, to point out the shortcomings that are preventing the plans from being fulfilled, uncover new economic potential and recommend measures to overcome shortcomings and improve production.

Party control does not substitute for economic management. The director or administrator is personally responsible for his actions. One-man management in socialist society is not, however, administration by high-handed measures but

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 44-45.

presupposes an ability to command, organise work, select personnel, give correct instructions, demand an account of how instructions have been complied with, eliminate negligence and the unwillingness to take personal responsibility. At the same time one-man management presupposes an ability to maintain contacts with the public and the entire collective of the given enterprise or institution.

The socialist principles of economic management are based on the idea of one-man management combined with the broadest democracy in carrying out mass control. Under such circumstances the manager himself is interested in daily control from below, because such activity helps him to manage the enterprise, discover shortcomings at their initial stage and mobilise a large number of people to set matters right.

Non-Party people can also take part in Party control over the work of the administration. The primary Party organisation of an enterprise is made up of the collective's best representatives; it bases the Party itself on the collective, and is the organ through which the collective expresses its opinions. Those Party organisations which have established close ties with their collectives are the most successful.

Communists and non-Party people have common tasks; and in order to deal with them successfully they act jointly in discussing together the urgent questions of production; they map out ways of raising efficiency and control the fulfilment of their plans. When a Party organisation is preparing to hear the report of a certain administrator, it involves as many people as possible in inspecting the man's activity. At such a meeting non-Party people also have the right to contribute to the discussion. Formally, of course, they are not included in the Party commission which examines the work of the administration, but the commission always takes into consideration the opinion of non-Party people.

When we are considering the relations between the Party organisation and the management, we must keep in view the following important fact.

No organisation of the Communist Party depends on any other institution whatsoever. Party organisations are not tied by departmental interests, and because of their independent position, they can examine any question in depth and with-

out bias and indicate the correct direction, conversant with the national interests, that the work ought to take.

The Communist Party sees to it that Party leaders only know one kind of dependence: dependence on the Party and the people. This safeguards their independence and their ability to decide every question in accordance with their principles. The official who stands by his principles is not afraid of independent action and initiative, while someone who is always keeping his eye on the management is often more concerned with maintaining good relations with everybody and inclined to close his eyes to shortcomings and malpractice.

Their full independence from Soviet economic agencies is most important in enabling the Communist Party organisations to examine economic questions objectively and uncover errors and mistakes.

The Communist Party guards the independence of its organisations and rejects everything that obstructs criticism and self-criticism on the part of the economic executives. So as to exclude the possibility of bribery and nepotism, for example, Party officials are strictly forbidden to accept honours from economic agencies.

This ruling however does not apply to production work. If a team-leader, a worker or an engineer, who happens to be secretary of the Party organisation, achieves good results at his job, invents something or forwards a technical proposal, he is entitled to remuneration or a premium in just the same way as any other employee.

In order to improve control the Communist Party sees that the administrative and official relations between Communists do not intrude into Party life. Otherwise this could lead to an intolerable situation where servility, toadyism and departmentism reign unchecked, and in such an atmosphere the Party organisation risks becoming the mere appendage of the management or of the director of an institution.

This sometimes actually happens in organisations and ministries where, because of the specific features of work in these departments, Party organisations have no control over the work of the management. But just because the Party organisation has no right of control this does not mean that it should be a mere observer.

In such cases the Party organisation should make the shortcomings in the working of the apparatus or of individual officials known to higher authority concerned. The CPSU Rules demand that all Party organisations without exception fight against negligence and mismanagement, strengthen state and labour discipline, and involve and concern themselves with the opinions of all members of the collective.

All Communists have equal rights, and equal responsibilities whether they belong to the Party organisation of an enterprise or institution. The Party organisation of a ministry, therefore, has the right and is in fact obliged to examine all matters which concern the work of the administrative apparatus. The closer the ties the Party organisation has with non-Party employees and the greater the attention it pays to their criticisms, the greater the chance that it will speedily discover shortcomings and eliminate them.

It might be asked: since the Party organisations have the right of control over the work of the management and since the Communist Party is the only party in the USSR, is this not a substitution for the various Soviet and economic organisations?

This sometimes does happen, but such cases are disapproved of and criticised. Control of any type in socialist society does not mean tutelage over these organs which are called upon to handle economic problems; nobody should do their work for them or assume their responsibilities.

The socialist principle of economic management was clearly formulated back in 1921 at the 11th Congress of the Communist Party, held under Lenin's leadership. A section of one of the Congress resolutions reads:

"In no case should the Party organisations interfere with the daily and routine work of economic organs; they must altogether refrain from administrative orders in the field of Soviet work. The Party organisations should direct the activities of economic organs, but not substitute them or deprive them of their responsibility."¹

Party work is always and under all circumstances work

¹ *The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions of its Congresses, Conferences and Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee*, (Russ. ed.), Part 1, pp. 627-28.

with people, care for their education, and the selection of the most experienced people for each post and position, of people who know their job and who can assume personal responsibility. This is the goal pursued by each and every means of control practised in socialist society, whether it is Party, state or public control.

Socialist society successfully combines both state and public principles of management. Management is effected by the joint efforts of professional workers employed by the state and the broad masses of the working people for whom direct management is not a profession, but a public duty.

The Communist Party, by creating the necessary conditions, is trying to draw every citizen in the work of state administration. An example of this is the nation-wide struggle for higher labour productivity, the purpose of which is to increase free time so that people can take part in administrative work. People become more conscientious and, instead of being interested only in their narrow personal matters, feel a keen desire to actively participate in the affairs of society. And last but not least the Party teaches millions of people how in practice public affairs should be conducted.

The development of public principles is most vividly manifested in *the growing role of the Soviets* of Working People's Deputies in the life of Soviet society. The Programme of the CPSU says: "The Soviets, which combine the features of a government body and a mass organisation of the people, operate more and more like social organisations, with the masses participating extensively and directly in their work."¹

It is primarily by their participation in the Soviets that the masses learn statesmanship.

The Soviets are among the most representative organisations of the working people. The majority of deputies are workers, peasants and employees of research and cultural institutions who perform their electoral duties in their spare time without any remuneration.

The Soviets enlist the services of a huge army of activists so as to raise the effectiveness of administration in all spheres of public life. Hundreds of thousands of standing commissions, non-staff departments and public inspection agencies

¹ *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1962, p. 548.

have been set up. At the 24th Congress of the Communist Party it was disclosed that the army of voluntary assistants working with the Soviets numbered 25 million activists.

Such democracy is naturally impossible in a society based on antagonisms and split by the irreconcilable contradictions between the oppressed and the exploiters. At best, democracy under capitalism is curtailed, limited, and in many ways a mere formality. Lenin justly noted that "bourgeois democracy, although a great historical advance in comparison with medievalism, always remains, and under capitalism is bound to remain, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and deception for the exploited, for the poor".¹

The Soviets are guided in their work by Lenin's principle of the organic combination of legislative, control and executive functions which eliminates the gap between the legislative and executive powers inherent in bourgeois parliamentarism and establishes one of the important conditions for the genuine sovereignty of the people.

The role of the Soviets is constantly increasing. The Communist Party has implemented a number of measures aimed at extending the rights of district, city and village Soviets and raising their responsibility to their constituents.

A resolution of the 24th Congress of the CPSU notes that these measures have led to more active work on the part of the Soviets in various fields. The local Soviets are increasingly availing themselves of the rights accorded to them in co-ordinating, within the scope of their competence, the work of enterprises and economic organisations located in their areas. Much attention is being paid to the utilisation of local resources for the manufacture of consumer goods, organisation of trade and communal services, modernisation of towns and villages, and the development of culture.

One of the typical features of the Soviets' work is its public character. This is manifest in the regular reports made to constituency by the leading officials of executive committees, their departments and sectors, members of standing commissions, and all deputies; in the extensive coverage of the work of the Soviets in the press and on the radio and

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 243.

television; in the electors' mandates and the checks held to ensure that they are being carried out; in the working people's control over the activities of state agencies, and in the active participation of the people in drafting and implementing the decisions of local and central organs of power.

The socialist countries regard the development of public involvement as one of the main tasks of confronting the organs of power. The Communist Parties are trying to keep the population of all towns and villages well informed of what the organs of power are doing, they want the people to actively participate in this work of the organs of power so that issues basic to the life of town and countryside can be discussed by the working people in their places of work and residence.

The 24th Congress of the CPSU paid much attention to the further advancement of the role of Soviets and their deputies and the extension of their rights as spokesmen and executors of the will of the electors. The Congress considered it wise to enact laws on the status of all deputies irrespective of their level, on their powers and rights, as well as on the duties of other officials in their dealings with deputies.

The formation procedure is evidence of the democratic nature of the system of Soviets. Deputies are directly elected by the people on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage and the secret ballot. The number of electors taking part in voting has steadily increased. In 1926, only 50.8 per cent of the electorate took part in the elections; the figures for 1929, 1931 and 1934 are 63.5, 72.1 and 85 per cent respectively. From 1939 onwards all elections of deputies of Soviets have had a 99 per cent turnout. The elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in June 1970 involved 99.96 per cent of the electorate. The same was true of the June 1971 elections to the Supreme Soviets of the Union and autonomous republics and elections to the local Soviets.

The composition of the Soviets clearly reflects the social structure of socialist society and is a vivid illustration of the democratic nature of the system of Soviets; 50.3 per cent of the deputies of the present convocation of the USSR Supreme Soviet are workers and collective farmers.

In spite of all the boostings of the press, not a single bour-

geois parliament reflects the social structure of society. As a rule these bourgeois parliaments include no representatives of the working class or the peasantry, who are the actual producers of material wealth. Out of the 535 members of the US Congress, for example, 184 are entrepreneurs and bankers and 57 are big landowners, many others are generals or high-ranking officers, and there is not one worker in Congress (although the working class accounts for more than half of the country's population).

The following undeniable facts are also very significant. Young people are practically excluded from bourgeois parliaments. The average age of American Senators is 55, and of Congressmen, 51. In the Soviet Union the organs of state power include more than half a million young people. Nearly 20 per cent of deputies to the USSR Supreme Soviet are young men and women.

There is another example. Contrary to the slanderous falsehood spread by the enemies of socialism, both Communists and non-Party people alike are elected to the organs of power in the socialist countries. They form a single bloc during election campaigns and they work together to serve the people in the most democratic organs of power.

Approximately half of the deputies to the Leningrad Soviet are non-Party people. One of them, a worker, V. Akimov, inspected two new schools and found that the children, through the fault of the builders, were not provided with hot meals. Akimov went to the chief of the district education department and asked him to summon the city construction chief and the head of the department responsible for the building of the schools.

Here you have a case of a non-Party deputy severely criticising two executive officials, both Party members. Steps were quickly taken to eliminate the omission.

This example is not an exception. The socialist way of life implies severe and democratic criticism of all who err and make mistakes in their work.

The growing role of the Soviets and extension of their control functions is connected with the widening scope of the powers of the elected organs and the real contribution of deputies to the administration. This question was tackled seriously in the early years of Soviet power. For example,

the Programme of the Communist Party, which was adopted in 1919, envisaged the following:

"(1) Compulsory engagement of every member of a Soviet in a definite work concerned with managing state affairs.

"(2) Consecutive transfer from one work to another so as to gradually encompass all branches of government.

"(3) Gradual involvement of all the working population without exception in the work of managing state affairs."

The same idea has been set down in the new Programme of the Communist Party: "Every Deputy to a Soviet must take an active part in government affairs and carry on definite work."¹

Deputies everywhere are becoming more active, the growing number of deputies taking part in debates during sessions is proof of this. In 1969 1,159,497 people, representing more than half of the total number of deputies to the local Soviets spoke at sessions.

The Soviets are intensifying their control over the administrative apparatus. Many questions which were formerly attended to by executive organs are now being passed on to the standing commissions of the local Soviets. The commissions check that the decisions taken at the sessions are being implemented.

The extension of the control functions exercised by the public is illustrated by the reports presented to the public by the organs of power, the right of the electors to recall their deputies before their term of office expires and in the frank discussions by citizens of all questions of governmental, economic and cultural development. In 1968, the electors recalled in all 541 local Soviet deputies, including 4 regional, 69 district, and 46 town deputies. The following year 323 deputies were recalled.

The sessions work in an atmosphere of absolutely free criticism and self-criticism. The deputies can discuss the questions on the agenda unhurriedly and from all viewpoints; they can make remarks and suggestions; they have the right to make inquiries of executive and managerial officials and to receive detailed explanations.

The deputies have the right to place on the agenda of the

¹ *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1961, p. 549.

Soviet or its executive committee any problem arising from their work and contact with the public. The Communist Party insists that the Soviet deputies should always keep close links with the people; they must be aware of the needs, requirements and the mood of the masses; they must regularly meet with their constituents, examine their complaints and statements, and take prompt action when needed.

The people are informed beforehand of the agenda of the forthcoming session of a Soviet so that they have time to send their suggestions to the executive committees. Notices of forthcoming sessions often contain full texts or a synopsis of the reports and also the draft resolutions.

One of the typical features which distinguishes the deputies in socialist society from their bourgeois counterparts is that the former not only take decisions, but also execute them. Lenin believed that Soviet deputies "themselves have to work, have to execute their own laws, have themselves to test the results achieved in reality, and to account directly to their constituents".¹

At the executive committee or standing commissions, if so instructed by the Soviet, any deputy can take part in checking the work of collective farms, state farms, enterprises, institutions and other organisations located within the territory of the Soviet, and table proposals in connection with the results of the inspection. The deputies have the right to enlist the services of their constituents in carrying out this work.

Another means by which the deputy maintains regular contacts with his constituents is by setting aside hours when he is free to see them. This practice also ensures that control from below is maintained. These interviews are conducted by deputies of all levels at fixed times and places. Their frequency however varies; the deputies of the local Soviets receive their constituents two or three times a month.

The responsibilities of deputies take up much time, but the people's representatives are not released from their main occupation. How are the difficulties this presents overcome?

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 424.

Take, for instance, N. Rusakov, a fitter of an electric engineering plant in Leningrad. Rusakov is deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. His responsibilities as deputy take up approximately two months a year. He frequently leaves work a couple of hours before the end of shift to attend to his duties as deputy. Rusakov is paid for these hours on the basis of his average monthly earnings of about 200 rubles.

It is not easy to do everything single-handed, so Rusakov is helped by an assistant, a retired lawyer, whom he pays from the sums allocated to him by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for his expenses as deputy.

Besides the public work the deputies carry out individually, there are collective forms of activity, involving the groups of deputies which are formed within a definite territory, such as settlement, constituency or residential area. In such groups the deputies can co-ordinate their work and attempt jointly to solve these complicated problems including electoral mandates for building or repairing schools, hospitals, communal enterprises, streets and roads, and controlling the work of enterprises and organisations in the area, which cannot be tackled single-handed.

The people have great respect especially for those deputies who press for the realisation of electoral mandates. The mandate is a form of control exercised by the masses over the work of the organs of power.

Take the example of M. Mchedlishvili, a village Soviet deputy. She approached the Council of Ministers of the Georgian SSR and two ministries with a request for the construction of a bridge over the Iori river. Her report was examined, and the arguments found valid. The Council of Ministers therefore passed a decision to build the bridge.

Definite guarantees have been established to ensure that letters which deputies to the Supreme Soviets address to leaders of state and public organisations, enterprises and institutions are examined adequately. The recipients have been made personally responsible for the timely and correct solution of questions raised in the letters. Proposals and statements made by deputies must be examined and acted upon immediately if no additional information is required, or

within a month, if otherwise. When a deputy of a village or settlement Soviet applies to the head of a collective farm, state farm, enterprise or institution, the answer must be supplied within five days.

There is another strict rule that the leaders of state and public organisations and enterprises are obliged to inform the Supreme Soviet deputies personally of measures taken in connection with proposals submitted by these deputies; if the deputies appeal to them through the press, the answers must be published in the same periodical.

In socialist society the nature, direction and scope of the control exercised by public organisations are determined by the social task and functions of the organisation concerned. Let us take, for example, the *trade unions*, which form the largest voluntary public organisation unifying the working people on the basis of their profession.

Speaking of the influence which trade unions exert on the state apparatus when the people are in power, Lenin emphasised that "we, for our part, must use these workers' organisations to protect the workers from their state, and to get them to protect our state".¹

What protective functions had Lenin in mind? Is it not a paradox that in the most democratic society, socialist society, there is a need to protect the working people from their own state? Let us look into this question.

Socialism, as is well known, generates and develops a new economic mechanism allowing for the progressive growth of social production. This economy is based on the combination of centralised planning with commodity-money relations, extensive rights to enterprises, and the introduction of economic incentives for initiative and positive results, and the moral and material encouragement of collectives and individuals.

The economic methods of management under a socialist system of production create conditions in which it is profitable for an enterprise to operate efficiently. This is primarily ensured by the cost accounting now introduced in many enterprises.

Lenin said that cost accounting, which envisages higher

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 25.

labour productivity and the profitability of every enterprise and which is connected with the inevitable departmental interests and excessive departmental zeal, "is bound to create a certain conflict of interests in matters concerning labour conditions between the masses of workers and the directors and managers of the state enterprises, or the government departments in charge of them".¹ In such cases the trade unions must represent and defend the interests of the working people.

The protective functions of trade unions, however, arise not only from cost accounting that takes place at the enterprises but also from that undertaken by higher and primarily economic organisations.

Lenin attributed the need to protect the interests of the working people to the existence of bureaucracy in the government apparatus. He noted that the trade unions had not dispensed with "the *non-class* 'economic struggle', which means combating bureaucratic distortions of the Soviet apparatus, safeguarding the working people's material and spiritual interests in ways and means inaccessible to this apparatus, etc. This is a struggle they will unfortunately have to face for many more years to come."²

This was written more than half a century ago, in 1921. Since then the Communist Party and the Soviet people have done much to strengthen the state apparatus with honest and reliable officials, to improve government administration by bringing it closer to the masses and encouraging millions of people to participate in it.

Times have changed. It is not only the administrative apparatus that has been transformed. A new historic community of people, the Soviet people, has emerged during the building of socialism in the USSR. This community is united by joint work, the struggle for a new life, its common and progressive ideology and the lofty aim of building a communist society.

The majority of Soviet office employees are qualified and conscientious people loyal to their country. The Report of the Central Committee to the 24th Congress of the CPSU

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 186.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 32, p. 100.

noted that "their work merits the highest appreciation and respect. But it must be admitted that there still are callous officials, bureaucrats and boors. Their conduct evokes the just indignation of Soviet citizens. Relying on public support, the Party is and will go on making resolute efforts to achieve more efficiency in the work of the administrative apparatus."¹

The report drew attention to the fact that for efficient management, an understanding attitude towards the needs and requirements of the working people and prompt examination of their requests and applications, is essential. The CPSU, actively supported by the Soviet public, is doing its best to ensure an atmosphere of cordiality and respect for people in all organisations.

It quite often happens that the failure to satisfy people's needs is due not to the shortage of material or financial means, but to the bureaucratic attitude of some officials towards improving the living standards of this or that group of people. Some economic managers are prepared to go to any lengths to fulfil planned assignments and illegally introduce over-time and violate labour laws and safety measures.

This explains why the trade unions' function of safeguarding the direct interests of the working people has to be maintained and is all the more important since the employees of some enterprises do not oppose and even approve, strange as it seems, the unjust actions of the management.

The 24th Congress of the Communist Party noted that "the safeguarding of the legitimate interests of the working people remains one of the basic tasks of the trade unions. It is no secret, for example, that we still have enterprises where over-time is systematically practised, where people are unnecessarily deprived of days off and where, here and there, labour safety is poorly organised. The trade unions can do much to eliminate these abnormal phenomena."²

The Soviet trade unions, which have a membership of over 93 million people, have extensive functions in the field of control. This is only natural, since the trade unions form

¹ 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, p. 94.

² *Ibid.*, p. 95.

one of the most important links in the system of socialist democracy, and one of the schools in which the working people learn the art of managing state and public affairs. Some of these rights are listed here.

The factory, plant and local trade unions *have the right*:
to act with the management in endorsing the expense estimates from the enterprise's fund for the improvement of cultural, communal and production standards, as well as for honours and grants-in-aid;

to hear the reports given by the heads of enterprises, institutions and organisations on the fulfilment of production plans, collective agreements, improvement of labour conditions, material, communal and cultural services, and to demand the elimination of shortcomings which have been brought to light;

to forward proposals to higher economic and government agencies on questions dealing with the improvement of production activities, labour conditions, material, communal and cultural services. These agencies are obliged to consider the proposals and inform the trade-union committees of measures taken.

Workers and office employees cannot be discharged from an enterprise, institution or organisation on the administration's initiative without the agreement of the trade-union committee. Over-time, and then only in exceptional cases laid down in labour legislation, is allowed only with the permission of trade unions.

If the trade-union committee finds that an employee has been injured or taken ill as a result of a violation of labour protection or safety measures on the part of the management it rules that the enterprise should pay the expenses incurred by the social security fund in paying grants during the period of temporary disablement or illness.

Factory and plant committees are represented on the commissions which deal with residential housing and communal and cultural projects which involve their employees. Living accommodation is distributed as agreed between the management and the trade-union committee.

The committee's right to insist that the organisation in question dismisses or punishes those executive officials who have violated labour laws, employed bureaucratic methods

or ignored the collective's opinion is very important. The management takes into account the opinion of the trade-union committee in appointing people to executive posts. The committee can also check that the tax deductions from the wages of workers and office employees have been correctly calculated.

One of the ways trade unions exercise control is by participating in the discussions at which the organs of the state apparatus work out and adopt acts aimed at regulating labour and wages. Control is necessary since such acts have been sometimes known to violate legal norms.

Once the Ministry of Education of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic sanctioned a wrong instruction on the remuneration of teachers of rural schools, as a result of which teachers' wages fell. The Ministry failed to discuss the instruction with the republican committee of the trade union of workers of education, higher schools and scientific institutions. The committee took action and the Ministry was compelled to annul the instruction. The Minister of Education of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic ordered that the teachers be paid in accordance with the existing laws. The juridical rights of teachers had been violated because the trade union had taken no part in discussing the act, but the damage was immediately repaired on the demand of the trade-union organ.

The forms of workers' collective participation in the management of an enterprise and the control of its running are most varied. They include, first and foremost, workers' meetings, regular production conferences, scientific and technical societies, public designing, technological and rate-setting bureaux, groups involved in economic analysis, councils of the society of inventors and rationalisers, public personnel departments, councils of innovators, etc.

Collective agreements and the systematic checking up of their fulfilment play an important role in this connection.

The *collective agreement* is a document which sets down the mutual obligations of an enterprise management and collective. It is concluded not later than February of each year after it has been carefully discussed and approved at the meetings of the workers and office employees of all shops, sections and departments of the enterprise. The agreement

is signed by the trade-union committee on behalf of the entire collective.

In this document the two sides pledge to take the necessary steps to fulfil the production plan, to introduce the latest techniques discovered by science and engineering both at home and abroad, raise labour productivity, see to the efficient utilisation of all material resources, improve labour organisation and rate-setting, raise profits and economic efficiency, increase the employees' material interests, raise qualifications, etc.

The collective agreement also envisages such important mutual obligations as enlisting working people in the management of production, the improvement of labour protection and safety measures, bettering efficiency and the ethics of labour, provision of places in sanatoria and holiday hotels for the employees, and of various privileges to the best employees. It plans the commissioning and repair of houses, child-care institutions, public catering enterprises, trading establishments, medical institutions, and the improvement of their activity; encourages collective gardening, and promotes culture, education and sport.

The execution of the collective agreement is daily checked by standing commissions of shop and all-factory trade-union committees and by the management. Mass check-ups involving the majority of the trade-union members are usually made every five or six months.

Reports are given at workers' meetings by the representatives of the management and the trade-union committees. The meetings are very lively and provoke great interest. There is plenty of criticism. Successes are greeted with satisfaction, but those who are guilty of mistakes are not let off lightly.

If it comes out that the management has failed to comply with some point in the agreement the collective can, once the reasons behind this oversight have been established, demand material punishment and reprimand of the guilty party. This is a manifestation of the power of mass control, and the authority enjoyed by workers' meetings and trade unions which, as schools of economic management and communist education, teach the masses to manage their enterprises.

Do conflicts arise between the trade unions and the management? A. Kondratenko, chairman of the trade-union committee of the Skorokhod Shoe Amalgamation in Leningrad, answers this question in the following way:

"There are no conflicts of principle, but if the management fails to keep one of its provisions, the trade union not only has the opportunity, but also extensive rights in defending the interests of the working people. Here is an example. The management of our enterprise failed to carry out on time some measures set down in the collective agreement for protecting labour. The trade union compelled the management to carry out the measures and demanded that the executives guilty of negligence be punished. The offenders were deprived of their bonuses.

"Most conflicts and disagreements arise between the management and individual employees. In such cases the trade union guards the interests of workers, tries to investigate the conflict without any prejudice and find a satisfactory answer. The cases are tackled by the shop labour conflict commissions which are made up of representatives of the trade union and the management. If no agreement is reached, the worker has the right to file his complaint with the factory conflict commission. If this also is without result, the problem is taken up by the trade-union committee of the enterprise. The last resort is the court, but such cases are rare."

That concerns conflicts between the management and individual workers. But it happens that some executives for no reason at all fail to fulfil the provisions set down in the collective agreement. When an administrator does not want to abide by the collective agreement, when he ignores the opinion of the collective, he is not fit to head the enterprise, shop or department. In such cases the executive is dismissed on the demand of the trade union.

The regular *production conference* is one of the basic forms of drawing workers and office employees into the management of production. The conference devotes its activity to seeing that state plans are successfully fulfilled, that internal production reserves are used in the most rational way, the conditions for high labour productivity created and managerial techniques improved.

At the Leningrad Kirov Factory¹ alone there are 47 shops, four departmental and one general production conferences involving 3,500 people. The conferences accumulate, so to speak, the creative energy of the entire collective.

The production conferences work out and distribute the recommendations of experts on the most important questions, such as the introduction of new machines, automation of production, improvement of quality, reduction of production costs, technical rate-setting, improvement of factory managerial techniques, capital, housing, cultural and communal construction, labour protection and safety measures.

The production conferences at the Kirov Factory sponsored a public review of production reserves which involved 4,365 workers. The workers submitted a total of 1,125 proposals which enabled the enterprise to save some 765,000 rubles.

The effectiveness of production conferences is however expressed not merely in rubles. These public organs help to train and prepare qualified economic managers and specialists. Electrician S. Orlov was very active in the presidium of the production conference of the Skorokhod Amalgamation². After he had acquired experience and knowledge he was made deputy chief power specialist.

The production conference has the right to study all problems related to the work of the enterprise, including wages and rate-setting, improvement of labour conditions, housing and construction of cultural and communal projects. The USSR Council of Ministers has ordered the administrations of enterprises and construction sites to eliminate all shortcomings uncovered by the production conferences and to keep them informed of how the decisions taken by the conferences are being carried out.

The trade-union committees are able to make the fullest of these legal rights only when as many trade-unionists as possible are drawn into control work. For this purpose the plant and factory committees have set up a series of public control commissions.

¹ The Kirov Factory (formerly the Putilov Works) is one of the oldest engineering enterprises.

² The Skorokhod Amalgamation in Leningrad is one of the world's major shoe factories. It has an annual output of over 40 million pairs of leather shoes.

The wages and rate-setting commission controls the implementation of rules concerning the fixing or changing of work grades, rates, reviews the rational employment of workers according to their profession and skill, and sees that wages and bonuses are distributed correctly and on time.

The labour protection commission has several functions. It makes sure that the administration observes the labour legislation, covering work time, days off, vacations, labour protection for women and young people, and over-time; keeps an eye on safety measures and hygiene, agitates for measures providing healthy and safe working conditions and sponsors public labour protection reviews. The commission also helps the management to introduce modern technology, new techniques, including automation and the mechanisation of production processes which eliminate hard manual work. It studies the reasons behind the accidents and diseases connected with various work; demands that the management deal with these situations and sees that the registration of investigation into accidents connected with production is conducted properly. It takes part in approving various projects, including new or modernised factory shops.

Finally it is responsible for checking the state of sanitation and hygiene and the supply of any items such as overalls, footwear, protective goggles or special food required at the enterprise.

Labour conflict commissions are also charged with many functions. They are composed of an equal number of representatives from the local trade-union committee and the management. The commissions are obliged to make the preliminary examination of all labour conflicts involving workers and office employees on the one hand, and the management on the other and take the appropriate decisions. Disagreement might concern questions of the application of wage and job rates, labour conditions and their effect on output norms; dismissals and transfers; payment for stoppages and defective work, for various jobs demanding a range of qualifications and for over-time and temporary absence; the distribution and size of bonuses; payments in cases where workers have failed to fulfil their quotas; cash compensations for unused vacation; special clothing, special food and cash

compensations for expenditure in this sphere; wage deduction for material damage caused to an enterprise, organisation or institution and the grants given to workers when they leave a job.

The commission is obliged to examine all conflicts in the presence of the complaining party and within five days of the submission of the application. The commission can summon witnesses, check the book-keeping and technicalities involved, and demand that the management supply all the necessary documents and calculations.

The worker concerned can, if he has valid reasons, object to one or another of the members of the commission taking part in the hearing. The request is decided by the director of the enterprise and the trade-union committee.

The commission makes a decision only if the sides agree. These resolutions are compulsory and need no further approval. When a worker is unsatisfied with the outcome, he can however bring his case before a people's court.

The following ruling of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR hardly needs any explanation: if the management has failed to carry out a decision of the labour conflict commission within a fixed time, the plant or factory trade-union committee gives the worker concerned a certificate which has the force of a writ of execution empowering the bailiff to execute the decision.

It is hard to overestimate the social and economic importance of the rights trade unions have in socialist society over the observation of labour protection laws at industrial enterprises, construction sites and in transport organisations, as well as in controlling safety measures and sanitation. Trade unions in bourgeois countries, where a system of unlimited exploitation exists and the working people deprived of rights, cannot dream of such extensive authority.

It is not for nothing that the workers' delegations which visit the Soviet Union are amazed by the role which the trade unions play in defending the rights of ordinary people, satisfying their material and intellectual requirements, and educating the members of every collective in high moral and humane principles. The collective, according to the well-known Soviet teacher and researcher, A. Makarenko, "is a free and organised group of working people, unified by the

same goal and same action, which is supplied with organs of management, discipline, and responsibility".¹

The trade unions are just such socialist collectives; they take part in the solution of many problems concerned with the country's development, in drafting state plans and managing the operation of all enterprises.

This is why the more politically conscious workers of Western countries who have visited the Soviet Union reject with disgust the slander and falsehood spread by anti-communist propaganda to the effect that Soviet trade unions have no rights and act as instruments of the administration.

All people with progressive ideas know that the working man can feel himself a full-fledged citizen only in a country governed not by the greedy monopolies and their henchmen but by the people. Only in socialist state, where truly democratic principles underlie administration, the masses actively take part "not only in discussing general rules, decisions and laws, and in controlling their fulfilment, but also directly in their implementation".²

A vivid illustration of this, in addition to the facts mentioned earlier, is the extent of rights exercised by the huge army of *non-staff trade-union technical inspectors*. These inspectors have the following rights: they instruct the management of enterprises, institutions and organisations, as well as individual officials, to cease violating labour protection laws and see that instructions are obeyed; they inspect the state of buildings and equipment and forbid work to continue at a factory or on a machine if the failure to meet the required standards is endangering the health of the workers; propose that the corresponding trade-union committee stop work at shops or enterprises which fall short of the safety or sanitation requirements.

Moreover they may fine officials for violating the rules and norms of labour protection or send evidence to the investigating agencies so that people guilty of such violations can be brought to book or even insist that the administration of enterprises or superior bodies remove guilty officials

¹ A. S. Makarenko, *Works*, (Russ. ed.), Vol. 7, Moscow, 1958, p. 13.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 212.

from work or reprimand them for not following the labour laws.

The Soviet Union has done much to raise living standards, improve social security and old-age pensions, expand the network of child-care institutions, hospitals, sanatoria, holiday homes, etc. Important changes have taken place in the system of state social security. The provisions made for workers and office employees in sickness, disablement and old age have been extended. The number of allocations on treatment in sanatoria, resorts and holiday homes has been increased. The government has introduced a universal system of old-age pensions for collective farmers.

Large-scale social measures have been planned and are being implemented in connection with the Ninth Five-Year Plan. It is sufficient to say that the chief task of this plan, as the 24th Congress of the CPSU pointed out, is the substantial improvement of the people's well-being. The economic policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union recognises no higher goal.

A prominent place in the struggle to realise this aim is, naturally, held by the trade unions and their special control organs. Let us take, for instance, the functions of the local trade-union organisation's *social security commission* which are as follows: to grant and fix temporary inability, maternity, childbirth, and other allowances, to allocate other grants from the state social security funds, and to check cases where the administration has registered uninterrupted working record for its employees; to investigate work conditions, suggest measures for their improvement and control their implementation; to analyse cases of sickness and their causes, check the organisation of medical services extended to employees and their families and offer proposals for the improvement of medical aid. The commissions also take the decisions on granting vouchers paid for out of the social security fund to sanatoria, keep-fit centres, holiday hotels, as well as tourist vouchers and discounts for special diet meals, and offer compensation for employees' travel expenses to and from sanatoria on vouchers granted by the social security fund or for treatment in antituberculosis sanatoria.

It is they who are responsible for sending children of workers and office employees to nurseries, kindergartens and

Young Pioneer camps, they who control the work of these institutions.

Finally they have to check that the management has correctly made its contribution to the social security fund, paid out grants and the other sums of money that come under social security, and examine complaints and applications dealing with questions of social security and take the necessary measures.

To form an impression of the scope of this important activity and the number of people involved in control work in the sphere of social security alone one must keep in mind that besides plant, factory, local and shop trade-union committees every trade-union group elects its own social security delegates. This means that the USSR has hundreds of thousands of public controllers carrying the cards of social security delegates.

Yet the picture of the trade-union control organisations would be incomplete without mention of the other elective organs of this, the largest mass public organisation of working people in the Soviet Union. These elective organs include housing and communal commissions, pension commissions, trade and public catering control commissions, communal services commissions, commissions on sports, physical culture and tourism.

Let us take two of the commissions listed above.

The commissions and groups of public control who check the running of shops, canteens, restaurants, kitchens, cafes, snack-bars, trade depots and fruit-and-vegetable factories have the following rights. They take part in fixing the prices and extra charges for food served by public catering enterprises of the given plant, factory, construction site, institution, or educational establishment, and control these prices. They are given a free reign in checking the work of a trade enterprise, seeing that goods and food-stuffs are delivered on time and the quality meets the required standards. The commissions fix the daily rota at trade and public catering enterprises, check the accuracy of charges and the investigation of public demand; ban the sale of bad food or food not registered in the relevant documents; make control purchases of goods, take samples of goods and food for examination and analyses in laboratories; forbid the use of in-

correct measuring devices; draw up reports on the violation and abuse of trade rules and send them to the agency concerned.

Similar rights are extended to *public controllers* who supervise the work of communal services, including tailoring establishments, repair shops, bath-houses, laundries, barber-shops, photo studios, etc. These controllers take part in inspections arranged by departmental control organs, submit demands for the dismissal or punishment of officials who never lift a finger to improve communal services. The suggestions tabled by the public controllers have to be examined by the administration within five days, and effective measures taken.

Such are the main control functions of Soviet trade unions, which like the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, are mass schools of management and control.

THE SYSTEM OF PEOPLE'S CONTROL IN THE USSR

1. CONTROL GROUPS AND SECTIONS

The groups and sections are the basic organs of people's control. They are responsible for control work at enterprises, on collective farms, and in the various institutions and organisations; they help the administration to eliminate all violations of state discipline and laws in all sectors of production, in management and in the public services.

State organisations take no part in forming the control groups and sections; their members are elected at meetings held by working people or their representatives. This procedure is democratic and it adds authority to the people's controllers.

Those groups of people's control which come under the village or settlement Soviets of Working People's Deputies are elected at meetings attended by the local residents or their representatives. These groups control matters which are dealt with by the Soviets; they co-ordinate their work with control groups at enterprises, collective farms, institutions and organisations within the boundaries of the given Soviet.

The groups and sections report on their work to the working people who elected them. The latter also have the right to give them mandates.

Take, for example, the decision of the employees of the Saratov Bearing Plant on the report of the people's control group:

1. To advise the elected group to eliminate in the near future the shortcomings enumerated in this decision. To step up their activity so that every controller worked with initiative and energy.

2. To consider the main task of plant and shop groups and sections of people's control to be to help the collective to fulfil the state assignments, uncover and employ reserves allowing for higher labour productivity, and fight for measures of economy.

3. To recommend that the groups intensify their control over the introduction of new machinery and advanced technology, as well as scientific methods of management, paying particular attention to the quality of output.

4. To arrange a more frequent check-up on work discipline, expenditure of electric power and fuel, and the supply of measuring instruments and parts.

Other recommendations included the greater recruitment of workers, engineers and office employees, and Komsomol activists into the work of the control groups; firmer ties with the Party commissions controlling the economic affairs of the enterprise; regular reports in the factory's newspaper on the work of control groups and sections; informing the collective of any shortcomings and how they are being eliminated.

People are very interested in the reports delivered by the control sections and groups. In Kazakhstan, for instance, more than 47,000 such reports were made in the first five months of 1971. The meetings were attended by over 1.8 million people; more than 100,000 took part in discussing the reports.

The control groups and sections, as has already been mentioned, are elected for a period of two years. But if a controller fails to justify the trust placed in him, he can be recalled. This is another instance of the democratic nature of people's control.

The number of people elected to the control groups and sections depends on the size, the specific features of the enterprise, collective farm, institution or organisation in question, as well as the amount of control work involved.

The members of control groups elect by show of hands a chairman, deputy chairmen and, if need be, a group bureau. The groups divide up into sectors, standing or temporary commissions; they approve plans of work, discuss the results of the more important inspections and draw up the necessary suggestions or recommendations.

The chairman of a control section is also elected by the members, by show of hands.

The organisational structure of control groups depends on the specific conditions of the enterprise or institution. The control group of the Moscow House-Building Combine No. 2, for example, is composed of 32 members. They have elected a bureau of 9 people and set up various sectors for controlling the quality of production, the introduction of new machinery, the protection of socialist property, measures of economy, as well as a sector for examining the letters, complaints and suggestions received from the working people.

The structure of the control group in the Transport Construction Research Institute is somewhat different. There are 39 members, 7 of whom are members of the bureau. There are quality and schedule sectors; sectors controlling the condition and development of the laboratory and experimental facilities, and examining the complaints and suggestions of workers, and a sector providing information.

The groups and sections are guided in their work by Party organisations and people's control committees. They usually adopt 3-month work plans. This helps them work out a definite policy and take into account the concrete conditions of the moment.

In their control work the groups try to be unbiased; they examine thoroughly all aspects of the situation, strictly adhere to and enforce the established principles. The control group is assessed not by the number of inspection it has carried out but by its success in eliminating shortcomings.

The control groups have many rights. They arrange check-ups and inspections at enterprises, collective farms, institutions and organisations and take part in the inspections carried out by superior bodies. They have the right to examine the documents and materials describing the position of the enterprise and to demand explanations from those who are guilty of frustrating the production plans, of violations of state discipline, bureaucracy, red-tape, mismanagement and other abuses. They can publicly censure any offender and compel him to report to the collective on the measures being taken to eliminate shortcomings; they can also file a case against the guilty party in the comradesly courts.

The control sections and groups keep close touch with

Party, Soviet and economic organisations and with the people's control committees. They can bring up before the committees a suggestion that a more thorough investigation of some matter be carried out; they have the right to suspend unlawful orders issued by officials and fine the guilty parties.

The execution of these broad rights depends on the initiative of the people's controller himself and the sense of responsibility displayed by the entire group.

Here are a few concrete examples of the work of the control groups.

At the Moscow Vympel Clothes Factory there are 310 people's controllers united in 9 groups. The central group comprises 29 people, 15 of whom are not members of the Communist Party. In just a little more than one year the group carried out 20 check-ups.

Each time the bureau made its plans with scrupulous care. The targets to be controlled were selected, the questions to be examined indicated, the necessary number of controllers calculated. Sample questionnaires and guide-lists were also worked out giving recommendations on how a check-up should be conducted, how the different questions should be examined and what documents ought to be studied.

On one occasion the group, reinforced by dozens of workers, office employees, engineers and Komsomol members, checked the consumption of electricity in the various shops and departments, auxiliary and service quarters of the enterprise. The check-up was preceded by a briefing, the main purpose of which was to focus attention on the need to uncover possible ways of reducing the consumption of electricity.

A thorough examination of this problem revealed that improvements in the production process could substantially reduce the consumption of electricity. The controllers suggested, for example, that the 7 kw electric motors used in the ventilation system be replaced by 4.5 kw motors and that the power-intensive equipment be transferred to a more rational work regime. Many other useful suggestions were for the coming.

The results of the inspection were examined at a group meeting. The recommendations were then passed on to the

management. The director ordered all superintendents and chiefs to tackle the problem and introduce within a specified time-limit concrete measures for reducing the consumption of electricity. The group assumed control over the implementation of the director's order and set up a temporary section for the purpose. Together with the shop groups, this section controlled the measures taken by the management, registered the daily consumption of electricity and made the results known through a special bulletin.

What was the practical gain? In one year it saved 334,000 kwh of electricity, which represents 8.7 per cent of the annual consumption.

Until recently the enterprise had irrationally utilised the left-over remnants of synthetic fur. The people's controllers examined this question and suggested that the scraps might be used for making parts of hats, toys and house-painter rollers. The management agreed and ordered the cutters' shop to plan the cutting out process very carefully. As a result the enterprise increased its annual output by 250,000 rubles.

The controllers took an active part in the campaign for the introduction of new machinery and technology. The group's chairman headed the factory commission that undertook this task. He made a statement over the factory hookup and in the factory newspaper, asking the workers to take part in the campaign.

The campaign involved many people. The suggestions they made, more than 300 in number, saved the factory approximately 125,000 rubles. Most of the suggestions, aimed at accelerating technological progress and raising the efficiency of production, were shortly introduced. They helped in fulfilling the plan of organisational and technical measures, installing more than 170 units of new production equipment, and setting up three transfer lines. As a result three of the chief shops without adding to their floorspace or their number of workers were able to increase the output of products by an average of 20 per cent; the annual output per worker in the factory went up by 14.1 per cent.

The group keeps a constant watch on the quality of products. It examines the demands and comments put forward by the factory's customers, the needs of the trading organisa-

tions, and the incoming letters and damage claims. Members of the group get together with their counterparts in the trading organisations and discuss ways of improving quality. The meetings are attended by the factory's director, superintendents, foremen, department chiefs and shop assistants. When necessary, the factory stops the production of outdated models that have proved a heavy burden on the economy of the enterprise and the trading organisations.

During the investigation of worktime the group found that many workers and office employees take far longer than the allocated 30 minutes for meals because of inadequate services in the canteen and the cloak-room. The situation was changed: the canteen was modernised and a sheltered tunnel connecting the shops with the canteen was built. The group insisted on the introduction of self-service and the advance sale of meal coupons. As a result hundreds of work-days were saved.

The controllers regularly report on their work to the collective. In 1970 they printed more than 60 articles and over 200 express bulletins in the factory's newspaper. They also made dozens of placards and notices dealing with measures to economise on electricity, materials and worktime.

People's controllers are people with authority; they enjoy general respect. The chairman of the central group, D. Lisitsin, one of the department chiefs, has headed the group since 1963. He is deputy secretary of the Party committee and member of the Sverdlov district committee of people's control. Lisitsin is an active rationaliser. The savings from the more than 70 innovations, technical improvements and inventions of his, that have been introduced, amount to nearly 500,000 rubles. Many of his innovations and inventions are employed at related enterprises, and for this he has won three silver medals from the USSR Exhibition of Economic Achievements.

A. Buldyayev, the group's deputy chairman, and other members of the group, including T. Agapova, V. Kornilov, and chairmen of the shop groups M. Volodina and Z. Vasilyeva, are also active in the field of innovation. Every third controller at the enterprise is an innovator. More than half of the controllers have won the title of Communist Labour

workers. Many have been rewarded for their part in reducing production costs.

The control group in the Hidroproyekt Design and Research Institute has set up 5 sectors covering respectively the observation of schedule, planning and finances, the introduction of new machinery, capital construction and organisation.

The group spends a considerable amount of attention on checking that the accurate design estimates which represent the institute's principal work are issued on time.

The group found that the institute tackled to many a problems at a time, and duplicated some of its activity. This increased the time taken over the designing of new equipment to three or five years. Sometimes the latest achievements of world science and engineering were completely ignored, and thus the projects in question soon became outdated. The results of the inspection were discussed at a conference called by the institute's director. An order listing concrete measures to be taken was issued. The activists took the implementation of these measures under their control.

The control group at the Ministry of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering approaches their work somewhat differently. The group observes the way in which the ministerial apparatus carries out the programme of commissioning new capacities for the chemical industry. The programme is the Ministry's main concern in the current five-year plan period.

Some of the problems which the controllers have to cope with include the delivery schedules of new equipment, measures to speed up its delivery and check that nothing is missing and that there are no causes for complaint.

In seeking the answers to these questions, finding the truth of the situation and making their recommendations the controllers often have to enter into contact with the control sections and groups at construction sites and factories which are awaiting or mastering new equipment.

Over a considerable period of time the lorries of the Frezer Factory carted their loads of waste to the dumping grounds. The workers were naturally pleased to get rid of the scrap which prevented the normal course of production. But the controllers discovered on one occasion that a large number of broken refractories were going to waste. So they

began to think of possible ways of utilising this material. Finally, after consulting the management and the trade-union activists, they found an answer.

Soon they put containers out for collecting the broken refractories, and when enough was gathered, they sent the pieces to a ceramics factory for reprocessing. Their work however didn't end here; they also noted that some of the refractory materials were kept in the open air and got spoiled. Once again the controllers beat the alarm and applied to the shop superintendent and the director.

Their persistence was rewarded. The management built a shed for the refractory materials, and this seemingly unimportant measure saved the factory a pretty sum in production costs.

Every organisation and enterprise has its specific features, and these influence methods of work. Controllers, however, wherever they work—in factory or collective farm, tram-car depot or shop, ministry or department shop—actively help the administration to put the people's wealth to the best possible use.

Thrift in everything is the slogan of the control groups and sections.

What, it would seem, is the sense in being careful on the shop cash-box cheque-bands? Is there any use in wasting time on a problem which involves nothing but a few pennies? Yes, replied the activists of a foodshop in Moscow, there is. Following their action just one group of cash-boxes saved the shop 40 kg of bands in three months. This is worth 120 rubles. If the whole shops and the thousands of others were involved it is easy to see that the sum could be expressed in 5- or 6-digit figure.

The shop used to be very irregular in getting their food crates and boxes removed. There is hardly any need to explain the consequences. The controllers got together with their colleagues at the repair shop and joined efforts with them in solving the problem. As a result the shop now spends 3,600 rubles for packaging materials instead of 7,000 rubles as formerly. The new figure is 0.02 per cent of the turnover.

One could say this is all very well but where do the administrators of the shops, enterprises and ministries come into it? Where are the engineers, economists, planners and

accountants? Is it not their duty to introduce the new machinery and keep count of the people's money?

Most of them are in actual fact capably performing their duties, but, as the saying goes, two heads are better than one. Particularly so, since it is not easy to keep an eye on everything when production rates are rising rapidly, the structure of production is changing qualitatively and scientific and technological progress and development of the initiative of the masses is moving forward at such a pace.

The economic reform in the USSR and in the other socialist countries has focussed attention on elevating the standards of management so as to keep abreast of the swift progress of scientific and technological development, the changes in the economy and the cultural progress of the working people. Under these new conditions, with the economic units becoming more independent, the old forms and methods of management have become outdated because they were based on direct and even purely administrative interference in the activities of economic and other organisations.

Lenin believed that rational management was an absolutely indispensable element of socialism. The very idea of socialism presupposes a scientifically organised society which studies its own evolution in depth and thereby ensures the best conditions for swift and sure progress.

In his last public addresses devoted to the concrete problems of economic and state construction Lenin pointed out: "It is time we learned to put a value on science and got rid of the 'communist' conceit of the dabbler and the bureaucrat; it is time we learned to work systematically, making use of our own experience and practice."¹

Repeating time and again that facts are stubborn and accurate, Lenin insisted that the questions of socialism should be explained not with loud phrases and exclamations but with the aid of facts and figures.

He would not tolerate abstract theorisations and truisms; he respected people who could study and reveal concrete reality, bringing to bear examples from all spheres of life. He praised a small book devoted to the experience of building Soviet power in one of the districts just because it contained

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, pp. 141-42.

excellently interpreted "live examples" which served as good lessons in the building of socialism.

He wrote: "We need more and more concreteness in studying local experience, details, the little things, practice, businesslike experience, going deeply into real life—*uyezd* [county], *volost* [rural district], and village."¹

It is most important that people's controllers should study objective facts, concrete experience, live practice, and uncover and put to the service of society hidden reserves. This is why the administrators and specialists regard the people's controllers as their trustworthy assistants.

The following story was told by V. Gukanov, the director of the Moscow Shoe-and-Leather Combine:

"In 1970 we installed four new drying chambers. Our controllers found that the water used to cool the chambers ran straight into the sewage. The chambers need daily 450 cubic metres of pure water at 20 kopecks per cubic metre. If this water was used a second time the combine could save 20,000 rubles a year. That's quite a sum, and it would have been, frankly speaking, criminal to disregard it.

"We thanked the controllers for their initiative and accepted their proposal. Now the water makes a double run over the chambers. Thus we have saved the 20,000 rubles a year.

"Here is another example, the installation of experimental equipment for the production of new types of leather articles. Some time ago the factory shop producing welt shoes found itself in a precarious position. There was not enough equipment to produce shoes in the new fashions. Once again we were helped out by the controllers.

"The controllers consulted specialists and recommended that a new technology be introduced. We agreed. The combine saved more than 50,000 rubles, and the quality of shoes has been improved."

Many speakers at the conference of the Moscow ZIL Motor-Works praised the activity of the local control groups and sections. This is what A. Guzanov, chief of the assembly and test department, said:

"One has to admit that it's not always pleasant to have deal-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 578.

ings with the controllers. They are persistent and they care little for the rank of the person or office under criticism. But it is impossible to take offence, because their demands are just."

The speaker then told the audience how the controllers pressed him to build a new mechanical truck washer. With their help the automatic wheel-assembly line was designed and constructed a year ahead of schedule. During the drive for high production standards the controllers inspected all work places and scrupulously pointed out all the faults that came to light.

"Say what you will," A. Guzanov concluded, "but those 70 pairs of controllers' eyes sometimes see more than us administrators. That is why we respect them."

It is no secret that you can find administrators who disagree with A. Guzanov. The controllers' persistence, their principles and the irreconcilable spirit with which they tackle backward and sluggish practices is not to everyone's taste. The controllers not always receive immediate support for their attacks on violators of state discipline, and on irresponsible and sluggish people. Some administrators try to get rid of the persistent controllers or impenalise them when it comes to bonuses or amenities such as flats.

To give an example. The Kirovsk town committee of people's control in Murmansk Region received reports from the controllers of Motor Depot No. 76 that their chief, A. Shevtsov, was guilty of illegal expenditure of state funds, and fraud. A. Shevtsov was taken up over this, but he concealed the committee's decision from the collective and took revenge against the members of the control group. With no reason at all he reprimanded the group's chairman, G. Maslennikov, and a few days later relieved him of his duties as a mechanic. The other members also came under fire for no reason at all.

L. Stvolinsky, Shevtsov's chief, was perfectly well aware of the committee's decision, but he took no steps to put matters right. Instead he came out in defence of Shevtsov, awarded him bonuses on three occasions and discharged all those who had exposed Shevtsov's criminal actions.

The case was brought before the People's Control Committee of the USSR. The investigation proved that the punish-

ments had been illegal. The reprisals were thus lifted, while L. Stvolinsky was removed from office for suppressing criticism, ignoring warnings and upholding people who had cheated the state. Shevtsov himself was tried and sentenced to four years in a hard-labour camp.

Instead of supporting the control group in its work, the director of a Bryansk bakery, Y. Shchukina began to eye the controllers with suspicion. In an attempt to discredit one of the controllers she even attempted in the face of the law to search his home. The town committee of the Communist Party reprimanded Shchukina severely.

Soviet legislation penalises those who attempt to persecute controllers. The controllers and their good name are defended by the Soviet courts, public procurators, trade unions and Party and state organisations. Any attempt to persecute the controllers or suppress criticism entails a reprimand, discharge from office or even a court case.

The most active controllers are thanked by their own committees as well as by Party, Soviet, economic and public organisations. They receive valuable presents, honorary certificates, medals and Orders.

A special badge for active work in people's control organs has been instituted as a reward for those controllers who have distinguished themselves. The badge is awarded by the People's Control Committee of the USSR at the solicitation of the local committees.

The press, radio, television, films and public meetings are widely used to popularise the experience of the best activists, groups and posts. In a word, for the benefit of Soviet society everything is being done to encourage the people's controllers and publicise their deeds.

2. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONTROL COMMITTEES

The district, town, regional and territorial control committees are set up by the corresponding Soviets of Working People's Deputies. The members of such committees are selected from among the workers, collective farmers, office employees, specialists, journalists and workers of science and culture.

All committees include representatives from all groups of the population, people of all trades, ages and positions. There are Communists and non-Party people. The committee in Kuibyshev District of Moscow of 13 members includes 6 deputies of the district Soviet and 2 workers.

The committee in Bauman District consists of 14 members: N. Bolyakin, a mechanic of a computer factory, L. Danilov, electrical mechanic and trade-union chief of a research institute, T. Tulupova, a worker at a food factory, M. Karaseva, chief of the planning and production department and chairman of the control group of a repair-and-building organisation, P. Glebov, director of an instrument-making factory, S. Kochegarov, department chief of the State Bank, L. Starikov, secretary of the Party Committee of the RSFSR Ministry of Education, N. Kuznetsova, an economist of the district finance department, M. Sharshakov, director of a designing institute, S. Gavrilenko, chief of the industry department of the district Party Committee, and Y. Penin, chief of the district headquarters of the Komsomol Searchlight teams.

The district, town, regional and territorial committees control the fulfilment of state assignments at the enterprises, collective farms, institutions and organisations irrespectively of their departmental subordination. They guide the work of control groups and sections, examine their reports, summarise their experience and organise training courses for the controllers.

To give a clearer picture of their work let us take the people's control committee in Kremenchug as an example.

Kremenchug is a swiftly developing Ukrainian town with a population of 200,000. In the period from 1966 to 1970 its industrial output was increased by 120 per cent and an ore-dressing plant and an oil refinery were put into production. The industrial enterprises in Kremenchug regularly fulfil their assignments ahead of schedule. Many cultural establishments are being built in the town.

The people's controllers deserve much of the credit for this success. During the last five-year plan they doubled their ranks to a total of 7,300 divided into 900 groups and sections. The town control committee is aided in its work by 145 non-staff inspectors.

The committee is responsible for seeing that the controllers understand their tasks, responsibilities and functions. Before announcing a review of production reserves, for instance, the committee called a conference of the group chairmen and prepared a methodological manual for them. The review and its aims were announced in the press and over the radio, as well as by posters. The inspectors maintained close contacts with the groups.

The review brought up more than 5,000 suggestions, including some 4,000 from the people's controllers. Once put into practice these proposals annually saved the town 15 million kwh of electricity, 13,000 calories of heat, 5,000 tons of fuel, 15,000 tons of lubricants, large quantities of ferrous and non-ferrous metals, rolled roofings and other materials to the total sum of 5 million rubles.

Following the decision of the People's Control Committee of the USSR the Kremenchug committee took steps to minimise cement waste. It was found that the greatest losses were sustained during the unloading and delivery operations. To put this matter right did not require extra expenses, it was all a matter of discipline and responsibility. People guilty of mistakes and wastefulness were punished. The losses were eliminated. In 1970 more than 2,000 tons of cement were saved.

Much has been done to uncover and utilise the above-quota reserves of goods and materials. Frequent check-ups revealed that instead of decreasing, the reserves were increasing. The committee recommended that industrial fairs be arranged so as to market the stocked goods. The fair in August 1970 was attended by representatives from Kharkov, Dnepropetrovsk and Kirovograd regions—1,670,000 rubles' worth of goods were on view; 1.3 million rubles' worth of goods were sold.

No committee can rely solely on its own efforts. The Kremenchug town committee thus maintains close contacts with all the control sections and groups, helps them to learn the art of control and economic management, supports their initiative and popularises their most notable achievements.

As many as 228 schools of people's controllers have been established at enterprises, construction sites and institutions, and they are attended by nearly all members of the

control groups and sections. Tuition is, naturally, held out of work-hours. The 8-months courses are conducted by economic managers, secretaries of Party organisations, specialists and committee members. The chairmen of the control groups and the other activists, 270 people in all, attend a regular seminar.

These regular briefings, and the education and encouragement offered teach the controllers to let nothing slip them by, to take the initiative and to have a sense of responsibility for their work.

A controller of a clothes factory, A. Domoslavsky, once noticed that the threaded bobbins were unloaded directly on to the ground and that the threads were torn in the process. He reproached the loaders, called the storekeeper and notified the shop superintendent. The uneconomical practice was discontinued.

A controller of the Kremenchug Motor Plant, V. Klimov, was concerned when he discovered that the assembly shop had sent off many good parts and hardware to the dumping ground. On the insistence of the control group the hardware was resorted and the guilty persons were fined.

Some time ago the main production line at this same plant began to work with frequent interruptions. The control group became alarmed and set up a commission to look into the matter. The commission soon discovered that poor production discipline, untidiness at work-places and inadequate control lay behind this. The results of the enquiry were discussed at a meeting of the workers. The guilty people were strongly reprimanded, and the control over the work of the production line was made more rigid. The number of alarm signals subsequently decreased.

The town control committee helps the groups acquaint the collectives with the results of check-ups and inspections so as to elevate the role of controllers and recruit more people to their assistance.

The groups are now applying more frequently to the Party and economic organisations, ministries and departments. The town, regional and republic organisations examine hosts of these suggestions and take the relevant measures.

The control committee of the Moscow Sovietsky District became interested in the construction of trade, cultural, com-

munal and catering amenities in one of the new communities. When the question came up on the agenda there were 30,000 inhabitants in the neighbourhood, a year or so later the number was to reach more than 100,000. And the construction plan failed to provide for any such trade, cultural and communal amenities. On the committee's recommendations the Executive Committee of the district Soviet of Working People's Deputies ordered that three foodshops, a branch polyclinic, laundry reception stations and other communal services be opened on the ground floors of the residential houses. The Executive Committee of the Moscow Soviet ruled that some of the trade establishments should be opened in the third quarter of 1970 instead of the first quarter of 1972. These measures considerably improved the district's communal services.

Here is a brief account of the functions of the higher people's control committees.

The committees of the Union and autonomous republics are subordinated to the Councils of Ministers of their republics and to the USSR People's Control Committee. They check upon the implementation of the directives of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, the fulfilment of state plans and assignments by the ministries and departments of the republics, and by the enterprises, collective farms, institutions and organisations irrespectively of the ministries they belong to. The committees have the right to place questions before the Party and Soviet organisations of the republics and, when necessary, before the relevant central agencies and organisations of the USSR.

The People's Control Committee of the USSR is a Union-Republican body which is directly subordinated to the Central Committee of the CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers. Its chairman is nominated by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

The Committee directs the work of all control organisations in the country; it examines and summarises their work, studies the appeals and complaints dealing with decisions taken by the local committees. Proceeding from the results of the inspections the Committee tables those suggestions which have a national significance before the Central Committee of the CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers,

reports on the situation in different branches of the national economy and on the organisation of activity in the various ministries and departments.

At one time the People's Control Committee of the USSR began receiving complaints about the shortage of certain types of goods for children. When the problem was taken up it was found that the light industry had enough materials and sufficient capacity to fulfil the plans. The trouble lay elsewhere.

Some enterprises, finding that the manufacture of shoes and clothes for children was not so profitable as the production of other types of goods, began to curtail the output of these goods. The directors of the enterprises involved had forgotten that profitability in socialist society is not an aim in itself and that the people's interests and the satisfaction of their demands are the most important considerations.

The directors in question were reminded of this fact; so were their chiefs in the ministry who had failed to take notice of the parochial approach to this question. The Government studied the evidence submitted by the people's controllers and ordered the Ministry of Light Industry to increase the output of shoes and clothes for children. Soon there were enough goods in all the shops, and the queues disappeared.

On other occasions when the People's Control Committee of the USSR has revealed deviations from the socialist principles of economic management and state discipline, the Soviet Government has likewise been quick to take effective measures.

It was found for example that some heads of the local organs of power had ordered enterprises and organisations subordinate to Union and republican ministries to allocate material and financial resources for building unimportant projects that ran against the state interests. Even when the circumstances require the construction of such projects, allocations can be made only on permission from the central managing agencies.

These illegal instructions, camouflaged as "care for local interests", led to illegal actions on the part of other officials. For the directors of enterprises and organisations who had

been ordered to make the unplanned allocations were discovered to be setting them down in the production costs, repair costs and other expenses.

These people had to be reminded that no one is allowed to infringe upon the interests of the people, of society and the state.

Lenin did not tolerate such behaviour. In November 1918, when he was Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, he wrote to the local organs of power:

"Since there have been *several cases* of interference by the local authorities in the economic and managerial functions of the administration of national enterprises and because cases of alienating the national property of individual enterprises for local needs are still observable—actions which disorganise their economy and deprive them of the opportunity to work according to plan—I emphatically repeat with warning as to the strictest responsibility for failure to comply, that the national enterprises are the common property of the Soviet Republic and that it is the factory administrations that are responsible for their business activity; therefore the local authorities have no right (unless otherwise stated by a special decree of the central government) to interfere in their orders or alienate any property of national enterprises without permission from the top administrative bodies of a given industry.

Chairman of the Council of
People's Commissars

V. Ulyanov (Lenin)."¹

Here is another example illustrating the way in which the People's Control Committee of the USSR guards the interests of the people and punishes those who do not follow suit.

Cases of poor catering on the railways were reported. This was serious since the railways carry approximately 3,000 million passengers yearly.

Investigations proved that the dining-cars worked inefficiently, that the selling of products on trains was poorly

¹ *Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*, p. 62.

organised and dairy products, vegetables, confectioneries, soft drinks were not always to be had at the railway stations.

The Committee instructed the USSR Minister of Trade, A. Struyev, to put matters right and reproofed the Deputy Minister, N. Zavvalov, for failing to take the necessary steps to make for better catering. V. Timatkov, in charge of the railway catering service, the chief of the Moscow Railway, L. Karpov, and the RSFSR Deputy Minister of Trade, A. Ivanov, were reprimanded and reproofed. The measures which were subsequently taken helped improve the catering service provided for both Soviet and foreign passengers.

The republic, regional and other local committees have the following rights:

They can ask the chiefs and officials of enterprises, collective farms, organisations, ministries and departments to furnish necessary documents and materials, hear their reports and explanations in connection with inspections and instruct them as to the best way of eliminating the shortcomings and violations.

With the representatives of the corresponding organisations they can arrange, when necessary, inspections of economic and financial activities as well as examinations into the production and technical aspects of their activities.

Further, they have the right to suspend illegal orders and actions by officials and report to the chiefs of enterprises, collective farms, institutions and organisations or to the higher authorities.

Finally it is within their power to point out the shortcomings in the work of officials, prevent their being repeated and arrange discussion on malpractice in public organisations and workers' collectives.

These rights illustrate the great importance which is being attached to preventive steps and educational measures against wrong-doers.

The great number of these educational measures does not mean that the control organs are lenient towards those who violate state discipline, and other wrong-doers. Control organs can resort to administrative measures.

When public influence proves inadequate or when the mistake calls for severe punishment, the committees can take the following steps:

They can impose penalties (the reproof, the reprimand, and the strong reprimand); order the officials to compensate for the material loss they have brought on the state, co-operative, collective-farm, public enterprises or organisations; remove officials from office for failing to implement the decisions of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, for violating state discipline and other serious mistakes. The discharge of officials in such cases is subject to established procedure.

Finally they may submit documents concerning thefts, misdoings and other criminal acts by officials to the procurator's office.

The rights extended to the committees give them the opportunity to be strict and exacting to people guilty of illegal activity, wastefulness, red-tape and other faults. The committees are called upon to make full use of their rights. This is the logical sequence of Lenin's thesis to the effect that control must always be unbiased and fair and that all factors should be taken into account during the investigations and that they should be comprehensively analysed before any conclusion is made.

When deciding whether or not an official should be called to answer, the organs of people's control are governed by the Party's demand for a humane attitude towards Soviet people. Accusations are always reasoned and based on evidence. The punishment depends on the gravity and the reasons behind the offence, and on whether or not mercenary motives were involved. The cases are always examined in the presence of the guilty persons.

Now a few words about *cash compensations*. Cash compensations cannot be called fines, they are applied to the guilty people as a redress for the losses sustained by the state rather than simply a punishment.

The application of this measure is subject to the Rules on Cash Compensations Ordered by the Committees of People's Control which were approved by the USSR Council of Ministers on August 4, 1969. As can be seen from the heading of the document, compensations can be imposed

only by the committees, and not by control sections or groups. The decision of the town or district committee has to be endorsed by the corresponding higher body, i.e., the regional committee, or, if the republic in question is not subdivided into regions, by the republican committee of people's control.

As a rule, cash compensations are imposed on officials who have caused losses to the state, collective farms, co-operative or public organisations by incorrect action or by inefficiency. Such cases include: failure to fulfil plans and assignments dealing with the delivery of products and materials that are needed by other branches of the economy, other Union republics or by the country as a whole; production and delivery of unsatisfactory items or incomplete sets; spoiling or wasting of raw materials, finished products and other values; above-quota losses of raw materials and semi-finished products during storage, processing or transportation, extravagance in the employment of state and public means; extra time taken over the loading and unloading of railway cars, river and sea vessels, lorries and aircraft; or delaying the removal of goods from railway stations, wharves or ports; illegal payments rising from incorrect prices, the registration of fictitious work, as well as from surplus payments in settling the accounts; illegal remunerations, bonuses, grants, pensions and compensations and illegal expenses for holiday parties and banquets; extra salaries paid out to the administrative personnel because of surplus staff, illegally high salaries to officials, and extra administrative expenses; illegal business trips to industrial enterprises, depots and marketing agencies for arranging deliveries of raw materials, finished products, fuel and equipment; failure to recover advanced sums, or the exact compensations for shortage of goods and thefts thus leading to a hopeless situation of debts; failure to exact fines from people through the fault of whom the enterprise, collective farm, institution or organisation was fined, if such people are under the existing laws fully or partially responsible for these payments.

The cash compensations cannot exceed an official's three-month salary. When more than one official is responsible

for some loss the sum of compensation is calculated for each separately depending on their degree of guilt.

The cash compensations are imposed as a result of investigations made by control committees, sections and groups and by financial agencies.

A question of cash compensations is examined by the people's control committee where the explanations of the guilty officials are heard. The committee's decision is final.

The relevant sums or money are deducted by the accounting office of the enterprise, collective farm, institution or organisation, where the official works, in accordance with the committee's decision; the deductions are made monthly but they must not exceed 20 per cent of the monthly salary.

Cash compensations are imposed only when it has been proved that the official's actions have really incurred material losses. The committees have no right to impose cash compensations for shortcomings in general, for violations of discipline or for other actions which do not result in material loss.

In some cases officials are on the basis of evidence submitted by the control committees brought before the court. Compensation is then exacted by court rulings.

Appeals against the committee decisions can be made to the higher control committees or other agencies to which the committees are subordinate. Decisions, on which reprimands are imposed, can be reversed on the request of the applicants or the corresponding control agency, ministry, department, collective farm, institution or organisation once the shortcoming has been eliminated.

The committees set up public sectors and temporary or standing commissions which supervise the different branches of economy, science and culture. The members are selected from among the most respected and competent workers, office employees, collective farmers and retired people. Their appointment must always be approved by control committees.

The staff of the control agencies is not large. Successful work therefore depends on outside voluntary help from

experts, workers and pensioners. But whether the controller is on the staff or not, he must be mature in his judgements and honest, endowed with the moral right to control others. Lenin wrote that "to be able to handle investigations we must have at the head of it a man who enjoys high prestige, otherwise we shall become submerged in and overwhelmed by petty intrigue".¹

Lenin's advice was that the most reliable people who would never take words at their face value, never go against their conscience, retreat from difficulties or fear to pursue their goals should be chosen for the organs of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

Not everybody can be trusted with the high post of people's controller, or more so, with a responsible position in the control committee. This work can be done by people of immaculate conduct and exceptional loyalty to the cause of socialism. Even this is not enough. The controller must be endowed with organisational talent, steadfastness and persistence. He must know his job and perceive the nature of the work he is undertaking. Only then will it become possible "quickly and unconditionally a) to secure fulfilment; b) to verify fulfilment; c) to check the correctness of the *apparatus* in the various People's Commissariats, departments, the Moscow Soviet or the Petrograd Soviet, etc.; d) to issue instructions on *how* the work should be organised".²

One can often hear officials saying: "The controllers are strict and exacting, but fair. They are not petty, they will never rail you without cause."

You could hardly ask for a better recommendation. After all the official of any Soviet organisation wants his apparatus to work efficiently and correctly.

Such a situation can be achieved only if each person displays strict discipline, organisational efficiency and a high sense of responsibility for the work at hand. This is particularly so for control organs and their chiefs who must be able to take an exact, strict and purposeful approach to their work.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 315.

² *Ibid.*, p. 247.

All who worked with Lenin noted his strict sense of exactness. If he had given someone instructions, he always found time to check how his orders had been carried out. This style of work applied even to minor affairs.

Lenin's sister, Maria Ulyanova, recalled that he always required the people who received his instructions or letters to sign their names on the envelope; and, this notwithstanding, he was certain to inquire as to what had been done on the subject dealt with in his letter. In that way he trained the Council of People's Commissars to be punctual, efficient and accurate in all matters.

The Communist Party educates the people's controllers and all state and economic officials in the spirit of Lenin's exactness. The Party constantly reminds the chiefs and heads of all organisations that only people who demand a lot of themselves, who set an example of discipline, efficiency and a principled approach can be demanding of others. Lenin wrote: "If we are conscientious in teaching discipline to workers and peasants, we are obliged to begin with ourselves."¹

The successful work of a committee member is ensured not so much by the power he exercises, as by his knowledge, experience and ability to organise people. If he lacks such qualities, nothing will help him. If people regard the man as a shallow person severity will not save him.

Exactness, therefore, must be backed by competency, broad-mindedness and an ability to unify unrelated events and facts. True exactness expresses itself in a deep power of penetration and a confidence in the correctness of one's position.

In the course of investigations the controller comes across violations of state discipline and offences against moral norms. In such cases he must be firm, tenacious and insistent.

Lenin wrote: "The demagnetised petty-bourgeois intellectual keeps whimpering and wailing, is put out by any sign of evil or scandalous practice, loses his self-possession, echoes any piece of scandal, and is all puffed up in his efforts to say something incoherent about a 'system'.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 44, p. 80.

"The proletarian (not one by reason of an old profession but one by his actual class role), when faced with evil, takes up the fight in a business-like manner: he gives open and official support to the candidacy of the good worker Ivan, proposes the removal of the bad Peter, starts a case—and conducts it vigorously, firmly and to the end—against the rogue Sidor, against the act of patronage on the part of Tit, against Miron's most criminal transaction, and (after two or three months of experience in his new job, and practical acquaintance with his new environment) works out business-like and practical proposals."¹

It is a gratifying fact that such important qualities belong not only to the staff workers of the socialist control agencies, but to all activists. These people learn to act courageously and resolutely; they are prepared to level criticism against each and every person violating citizens' rights.

The structure and composition of the non-staff sectors and commissions depend on the tasks and the amount of work undertaken by the committee concerned.

For example, there are eight public sectors in Moscow's Kalinin District Committee covering general organisation problems; transport and industry; research institutions, design bureaus and educational establishments; administrative organs; construction, housing and communal improvements; health protection and social security; trade, public catering and communal services, and complaints and suggestions from the working people. There are 106 public inspectors, including 31 workers, and 42 pensioners; 88 of this number are Communists and three Komsomol members. These sectors employ 26 women.

The public inspectors do their work on a voluntary basis. When required, the control committees can ask the heads of enterprises, collective farms, institutions or organisations to relieve their employees temporarily for control work. These workers continue to draw their monthly pay. But the time taken up by such control duties must not exceed two weeks a year.

The committees can also engage the services of workers,

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 45, p. 165.

collective farmers, experts, representatives of Soviet, economic, trade-union and Komsomol organisations, workers in the press and in the cultural field, members of auditing commissions in co-operative organisations, worker and farmer correspondents, and other public workers.

* * *

As we have seen, the most important feature of the socialist system lies in the fact that the broad participation of the working masses in people's control and the management of society is effected not only through the agency of state organisations, but also through a wide network of public organisations which involve the entire adult population.

This expresses the genuinely democratic nature of the Soviet social and state system and of the socialist way of life.

Socialist democracy means a state and political system based on the broad rights and freedoms enjoyed by the people and the real guarantees that they are put into practice. Socialist democracy envisages the broad participation of the masses in active social and political work and the constant improvement of the government system so that socialism is strengthened and the successful building of communism goes on.

Responsibility before the society for one's own work and for the work and deeds of others is a typical feature of socialist democracy.

The Central Committee's report to the 24th Congress of the CPSU said the following: "The responsibility of each to the collective and of the collective for each of its members is an inalienable feature of our way of life."¹

This can only be true of a socialist society. The private ownership of the means of production, which lies at the root of capitalism, alienates people, counterposes their interests and distorts their thoughts and feelings. This is why individualism and egoism are typical features of the bourgeois way of life.

¹ 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, p. 97.

The disintegration of values under capitalism and the enrichment of man and his personality in a socialist society reflect the basic difference between the two systems. This was the conclusion put forward by guest-representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the capitalist countries who attended the 24th Congress of the CPSU.

Gus Hall, General Secretary of the US Communist Party, said that one cannot compare the depth of people's uncertainty about their future, their growing feeling of alienation and disappointment due to debarring them from active participation in the life of society under capitalism, on the one hand, and the feeling of people that they are needed by society, their opportunity to guide its development under socialism, on the other.

Only socialism gives life to genuinely democratic norms which become the need and the rule of conduct for millions of people. Under socialism man is governed not by the old and obsolete principle "I have nothing to do with it", but by the new and most humane principle "I am responsible for everything".

The CPSU is concerned with the progress of socialist democracy; its aim is that every citizen should feel himself the real master of the country. Such a person is vitally interested in the affairs of the society and takes a share in the common responsibility.

DIRECT CONTROL BY CITIZENS

In all its activity the Communist Party of the Soviet Union proceeds from the truly scientific Marxist thesis that the people, the multi-million masses of working people are the main force in historic development.

The CPSU is part of the people, their advance guard. Communists have no particular interests of their own; they express the will of the working class and of all working people. The CPSU owes its success to the support of the masses.

When the Marxist Party was in the making in Russia, Lenin theoretically substantiated the importance of the close links between the Party and the masses, and indicated that the strengthening of those links meant to go forward, to show the way to solve all the ideological, political and organisational problems facing the workers' movement, to elevate the consciousness of the masses, and unify them in the struggle for a new life.

As more and more sections of the people become involved in the active historic development, the importance of the Party's ties with the working masses increases. Socialism is, after all, the creative work of the masses guided by the advanced, organised and most conscious portion of society.

Every time the Soviet Union was faced by an urgent political, economic or military task, the Communist Party appealed to the working people and mobilised them. In the exceptionally hard year of 1919, when the country was fighting the war unleashed by the interventionists and the

internal enemies of the Soviet Union and at the same time was facing an acute fuel crisis, Lenin pointed out:

"Our victories were due to the direct appeal made by our Party and by the Soviet government to the working masses, with every new difficulty and problem pointed out as it arose; to our ability to explain to the masses why it was necessary to devote all energies first to one, then to another aspect of Soviet work at a given moment; to our ability to arouse the energy, heroism and enthusiasm of the masses and to concentrate every ounce of revolutionary effort on the most important task of the hour."¹

Lenin time and again warned Communists against swagger, self-conceit and against everything that might alienate them from the masses. He insisted that the Party should always take into account the interests and moods of the various sections of the working people and listen attentively to the voice of the people and to their demands.

The Communist Party never evades the control of the masses. It acts openly, before the eyes of the entire people. Educating the masses, it learns from them, publicises their best achievements, and accepts critical remarks from non-Party people.

It is true, Lenin said, that the Communist Party must guide, direct and control, but "conversely, we must have non-Party people controlling the Communists".² He placed exceptional value on the opinion of the non-Party masses.

Progressive people throughout the world know that Lenin himself set a great example of indissoluble ties with working people. He keenly penetrated into the workings of the people's consciousness, he never lost an opportunity to be amongst the people and see life as they lived it. He repeatedly pointed out how his meetings with people, their letters, requests and complaints helped him to understand events correctly, and gauge the mood of the people. Although he was exceptionally busy with internal affairs and international problems, the leader of the world's first socialist country always found time to meet ordinary people. Addressing the Eighth All-Russia Congress of the Soviets,

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 139.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 388.

Lenin said: "Yesterday I had the pleasure of being present—regrettably, for only a short while—at a small private conference of non-Party peasant delegates to our Congress and I learned a great deal from their discussion of some of the most burning questions of rural life."¹

Lenin took detailed notes of the opinions and requests of all speakers and told the delegates that all their suggestions and critical remarks would be made known to the corresponding government organs in order that the necessary steps be taken.

Lenin always acted in this manner. He often spoke with workers and peasants who came to see him from all over Russia; he personally read the letters and complaints addressed to him and supervised the execution of decisions taken in connection with the "alarm signals" coming from below, from the thick of the people.

Lenin educated all the leading officials and all Communists in this art of maintaining ties with the masses and attending to their demands and requests.

The Communist Party is inseparably linked with the people and is equally alien either to sectarian isolation from the masses or an opportunist courting of the backward layers of the population.

The Communist Party strictly adheres to Lenin's principle of consolidating ties with the people, studying their creative work, bringing to light the shoots of new and progressive tendencies, and actively supporting the initiative of the rank-and-file. The Rules of the CPSU contain a clause to the effect that it is the duty of Party members "to strengthen and multiply the Party's bonds with the people; to be considerate and attentive to people; to respond promptly to the needs and requirements of the working people".²

Open-door Party meetings are very important in strengthening the bonds between the CPSU and the non-Party working people. Back in 1921 the 10th Congress of the Communist Party pointed out that such meetings should be held regularly, that they should be devoted to the daily problems of workers and office employees and that the dis-

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. 31, p. 520.

² *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1961, p. 599.

cussions should involve as many non-Party workers as possible.

The Communist Party does not raise a wall around itself, it does not hide in its tight Party shell. The CPSU constantly seeks advice from non-Party people, and takes into account their opinion on various questions. Any Soviet citizen who attends an open-door Party meeting has the right to freely speak his mind even though what he says may be unpleasant to the Party organisation or to individual Communists. Just and critical remarks are precious to the Party and to the whole people.

Criticism and self-criticism is respected in a socialist society. The CPSU is not afraid of criticism, it does not veil its mistakes and shortcomings, it does not disguise them in the false robes of success.

Healthy and businesslike criticism will never undermine the authority of the CPSU or the prestige of executive officials; it will only help to correct a mistake, put right a faulty piece of work and educate personnel. As to assertions that criticism may discredit a man in the eyes of the people, Felix Dzerzhinsky, one of the outstanding Soviet political leaders, had this to say: "Only the man who hides his failures, who does not want to fight evil can be discredited, i.e., only the man who should be discredited can be discredited."¹

When the young Soviet republic was setting up its first state and public control organs Lenin's advice was that non-Party workers and peasants should be involved "in the informal verification and appraisal of work".² This means direct control of the state apparatus by the citizens.

Direct democracy is expressed in the opportunity of the masses themselves to solve the problems of management directly and not only through the representative organs they elect. Direct democracy involves millions of people who, unlike public controllers, are not vested with any particular powers. They act in their own name, in the name of the citizens of a socialist society.

¹ F. E. Dzerzhinsky, *Selected Articles and Speeches*, (Russ. ed.), Moscow, 1947, p. 176.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 388.

Direct democracy is exercised first of all on a local scale in workers' collectives; the most important form of direct democracy is the *general workers' meeting*.

The necessity of direct control over the state apparatus, in addition to the control exercised by various organisations, is the logical outcome of the evolution of socialist society. Since the society is genuinely democratic, the entire adult population is called upon to take part in control.

It should also be noted that not all citizens are engaged in public organisations, and therefore they are not all involved in the various forms of management and control mentioned earlier. But it is the duty of every citizen to guard law and order, to stand for no transgression or violation of the interests, however insignificant, of the society and its members.

This is why the moral right to control the work of officials and organs of management belongs virtually to all citizens, irrespective of their membership of public organisations and possession of special control powers. These last two circumstances only affect the degree and the forms of participation in control work.

Direct control is a means of strengthening the direct bonds between the state apparatus and the people. These bonds help the apparatus to be informed of the actual situation, the mood of the people, their requirements and interests, and their views on different state problems. These bonds help timely decisions which correctly reflect the actual situation to be taken. In other words they make possible the scientifically substantiated decisions so important in an age of scientific and technological revolution and of general social progress.

Another important aspect of the direct control exercised by citizens is that it has a tremendous influence on the state apparatus and induces improvements in this sphere. At the same time direct control strengthens the prestige of the state organs of power in the eyes of the public, imbuces all people with a feeling of responsibility for the country's interests, and reminds the officials of their duty before society.

This type of control is, naturally, not so highly planned as all the other forms. Organised control involves a fixed

number of people who act not only on their own initiative, but also at the request of state agencies and public organisations, whereas citizens involved in direct control act on their own initiative, without official commission.

But this does not mean that direct control by citizens is wholly unorganised or spontaneous.

First of all, control is exercised within the framework of the political organisation of socialist society which excludes the chaotic element. The people are well informed about the work of the state apparatus and its tasks. Therefore it is easy to see how the apparatus works and performs its duties. This exerts a considerable organisational influence on the direct control exercised by citizens.

Secondly, some forms of direct control, such as meetings, where people discuss the reports delivered by officials, are highly organised, since they are arranged by local authorities and public organisations. People who attend such meetings usually come armed with facts, which they have collected personally or taken from the press, and they have usually beforehand formed their own opinion of the work of this or that official or organisation.

Thirdly, in their control work the state agencies and public organisations heavily rely on citizens' direct control; they collect views and opinions on the work of the apparatus. This also gives direct control an organised character.

The private citizen has, naturally, not so many rights as the people's controller who is responsible before his organisation. The latter has the right to inspect trade enterprises, examine documents, demand written explanations from the workers of trade and, in case of malpractice, to draw up statements; the private citizen has no such rights.

But socialist society accords all its citizens broad rights which enable them to actively oppose the violations and shortcomings in the work of officials and organs of management. They have the right to *complain, make written statements and forward suggestions* to each and every state or public organisation.

Complaints, in the modern situation of the development of socialist society, are, as a rule, a form of response to violations of those rights and interests of citizens protected by the law and represent a means of controlling the implemen-

tation of this law. Complaints, naturally, are a sign that there are shortcomings in the work of many state and public organisations but also prove that people are keen to get rid of them and to prevent all violations of the established rules.

Following the policy of developing and improving socialist democracy, the Communist Party sees it as very important that the suggestions, statements and complaints coming in from the people are examined correctly and within the specified time limit. By submitting suggestions on political, economic, cultural and legislative matters the working people are able to participate in the management of state affairs, improve the apparatus and control over its work, struggle against bureaucracy and for the consolidation of socialist law.

This is why the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet in 1968 adopted the decree On the Procedure of the Examination of Suggestions, Statements and Complaints by Citizens. The essence of this decree is expressed in its principal requirement: all state and public organisations are obliged to provide the necessary conditions for the citizens of the Soviet Union to exercise the right, granted and guaranteed by the law, of making suggestions, statements and complaints in written or oral form.

The decree proclaims not only the right to make complaints or suggestions. All state organisations, enterprises, institutions, collective farms and co-operative and public organisations, all their chiefs and officials are obliged, as far as their status allows them, to accept the suggestions, statements and complaints and take suitable steps.

The decree makes it illegal for complaints to be dealt with by those people whose actions are challenged. Chiefs of all ranks are instructed to receive citizens personally.

When examining suggestions, statements and complaints the officials are *obliged* to study carefully their content and, if need be, ask for the necessary documents, send out staff workers to check the facts and take all other measures to ensure that the issue is settled in an objective manner; to take decisions only on the basis of adequate knowledge and see that they are executed correctly and within the allotted time; to inform the citizens of how their suggestions have been dealt with and if they have been dismissed to explain

why; to seek and eliminate as rapidly as possible the reasons behind the violations of citizens' rights and interests.

If a person is dissatisfied with the outcome of any suggestion, statement or complaint submitted, he can apply to the higher authorities directing the work of the given state organisation, enterprise or institution.

Statements and complaints must be examined by all agencies within a month; when they entail no additional investigations or verifications, they must be examined immediately, and not later than 15 days after the complaint has been received by the organisation concerned. The same time limits are to be observed in the case of suggestions, statements and complaints sent in by newspapers and magazines, as well as for related articles printed in the press. This most important function of state and public organisations is also subject to that effective form of socialist democracy—public control.

Representatives of the public organisations, people's controllers and advanced workers, office employees and collective farmers are invited to take part in the examination of the in-coming suggestions and the necessary investigations involved.

When necessary, the suggestions as well as the results of examined complaints that have a public importance are discussed at meetings of the collectives of enterprises, institutions, organisations or residential areas.

The CPSU demands that all managerial workers adopt a political approach to the critical signals, statements and complaints that come in from ordinary people. This was how Mikhail Kalinin expressed the idea at a conference of the officials dealing with complaints in 1933:

"If the ability to apply politics is needed anywhere, it is during the examination of complaints.... You meet with people, all your decisions concern people, and therefore the work you are doing is one of the most noble jobs."¹

The following example is another illustration of the tremendous importance which Soviet society attaches to crit-

¹ M. I. Kalinin, *Questions of Soviet Construction, Articles and Speeches (1919-1946)*, (Russ. ed.), Moscow, 1958, pp. 511, 515.

icism from the people and to other expressions of socialist democracy.

The existing laws provide for the disciplinary responsibility of officials guilty of violating the fixed rules dealing with the examination of suggestions or guilty of red-tape and bureaucracy in respect to suggestions and complaints.

Officials who infringe upon state or public interests or upon the rights and interests of citizens in connection with their complaints are prosecuted by law.

The procurators and the people's control keep a constant watch to see that Soviet laws are observed during the examination of suggestions, statements or complaints from citizens. They keep a check on how this work is conducted in all ministries and departments and in the connected enterprises, institutions and organisations, as well as on collective farms and in other co-operative and public organisations.

Socialist democracy presupposes strict discipline and organisation. The observance of the laws and ethical principles of society is another prerequisite, since these laws and principles express the will of the majority and their observance is in the interests of society as a whole and of all its individual members.

It is not only the government apparatus that is concerned with the observance of the laws. The Communist Party, the trade unions, the youth and other public organisations are all anxious that citizens and particularly officials should respect the legal code.

In the Central Committee's report to the 24th Congress of the Communist Party it was said: "No attempt to deviate from or to circumvent the law is to be tolerated, no matter what the motive. Nor can we tolerate any violation of the rights of individuals and infringement of the dignity of citizens. For us, Communists, champions of the most humane ideals, this is a matter of principle."¹

The complaints, statements and suggestions, being a form of the citizens' direct control over the work of the state

¹ 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, p. 97.

apparatus, are conducive to the maintenance of this principle.

Socialist democracy is incompatible with individualistic arbitrary behaviour, with an anarchic disregard of civic duty and with any actions infringing public interests.

One of the principles of socialist democracy is the submission of the minority to the will of the majority. In Soviet society the people form this majority, and it is their will that is expressed by the organs of the people's state. This will is formulated in the process of wide public debate.

When the basic agrarian laws were being drafted the Supreme Soviet of the USSR received nearly 3,000 suggestions from working people. Many of them were taken up by deputies and adopted by the session of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

People expressed different opinions at numerous meetings devoted to the draft Family and Marriage Law. The people send in countless suggestions when the draft five-year economic development plans of the USSR are being examined.

Lengthy discussions, involving millions of people, precede the adoption of many other laws. Therefore, we can say without fear of exaggeration that the organs of Soviet power act with due regard for the nation's opinion. The laws adopted in recent years on health protection, the family, the improvement of labour relations and the protection of nature and rational utilisation of natural resources, were all preceded by general discussion.

Another form of direct control by citizens is the report delivered at a *citizens' meeting* by officials of the organs of state management.

Lenin attached great importance to such reports. "It is necessary," he wrote, "not only regularly to convene general meetings of workers and peasants but also to make all officials report back to the masses of workers and peasants ... so that the mass of non-Party workers and peasants is enabled to criticise Soviet institutions and their work."¹

This idea is being successfully realised. It is reflected in

¹ *Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*, pp. 227-28.

the programme documents of the Communist Party and in the decisions of the legislative bodies.

The Programme of the Communist Party, adopted by the Party's 8th Congress in 1919, set out "to achieve the further rapprochement of the organs of power and the masses of the working people on the basis of increasingly stricter and fuller realisation of democracy in practice by these masses, and particularly by ensuring the responsibility and accountability of officials".¹

The Programme of the Communist Party, adopted by the Party's 22nd Congress in 1961, anticipates that "the principle of electivity and accountability to representative bodies and to the electorate will be gradually extended to all the leading officials of state bodies".²

In 1966, the 23rd Congress of the CPSU stressed that the members of the Government, the ministers and other leading officials should regularly report to the working people on urgent economic and cultural problems.

The Central Committee's report to the 24th Congress of the CPSU in 1971 noted that the workers' meetings and the general meetings of collective farmers were becoming more active and that their prestige was increasing. At the same time the report insisted that "it is necessary to encourage the practice of the heads of amalgamations and enterprises and also of top-level officials of ministries regularly accounting for their work directly to the workers".³

The laws of the Union republics concerning the local Soviets of working people's deputies establish that the executive councils of Soviets must report at least once a year to the sessions of the Soviets and to the electorate; the departments of the executive councils must report once every three or four months.

The number of departments and officials required to report directly to the people is growing from year to year. People are informed in advance when and where the report is to be given and who will be presenting it. Accounts of

¹ *The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences, and Plenums of Central Committee*, Moscow, 1954, p. 415.

² *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1961, p. 551.

³ *24th Congress of the CPSU*, Moscow, 1971, p. 85.

such meetings are made in the press and over the radio and television.

People are particularly interested in the reports given by the departments concerned with communal welfare; such as the departments of trade, health protection, social security, communal and housing services, cultural and public catering. Such meetings are never short of speakers.

The work of housing and communal organisations is controlled by the *tenants' meetings* called by house committees or house managers.

Conferences of consumers, customers, readers, radio and television audiences, clients of repair shops and of other communal establishments are very popular and widespread forms of direct control.

At such conferences the officials, in the presence of their subordinates, account for their work and outline the measures they plan to take so as to improve their work. Those who attend the conferences make critical remarks and offer advice.

The public reports made jointly by the leading officials of the higher and lower management bodies and the heads of those enterprises and institutions subordinated to them are very useful. An excessive number of reports is thereby avoided and the development of direct people's control is ensured and departmental control strengthened. When the chief of a district department accounts for his work in the presence of representatives from the related regional department, for instance, the latter often collect more information than during an investigation conducted by their inspectors. In such cases the representatives can personally ascertain the local opinion of the work of an organisation and of the bodies subordinated to it.

Sometimes the discussions of reports end with the adoption of decisions. These have no obligatory legal force, but influence the work of the corresponding organisations because they express the will of the people.

Legislation provides for the possibility of adopting obligatory decisions in connection with the accounts presented by the management authorities. Juridically compulsory decisions can, in some cases, be also taken by the *village meetings*. These meetings can hear reports from the executive

committees of village Soviets of working people's deputies, heads of schools, heads of trade enterprises, medical, cultural and educational establishments, as well as from representatives of the militia. The village meeting can adopt decisions which the executive committees of the Soviets are obliged to enforce.

The village meeting is an important form of direct democracy; its functions are being steadily expanded.

Citizens attending meetings and conferences not only criticise the management and suggest ways of improving their work, but also set forward measures to help the managing authorities which are to be implemented by the people themselves. When they discuss, for example, the work of the militia and take note of its shortcomings, they usually talk about what they themselves ought to do to improve the work of comradesly courts and of voluntary public-order squads. They criticise those who fail to attend work, who come under the influence of alcohol, or who deviate from social norms in their private life.

Thus, the public discussions on draft laws, the reports of the state managing bodies and officials at public meetings, and the various conferences of working people are a powerful means by which the masses directly influence the work of management. And at the same time these measures are encouraging more and more citizens to take part in governing the socialist state.

One of the most effective forms of citizens' direct control is *participation in the press*.

The force of public influence and the impact of the press in the Soviet Union is tremendous. The socialist press is a genuine platform for the masses, and its voice is listened to.

Nearly 9,000 newspapers and 6,000 magazines of various types are published in the USSR. A single issue of all newspapers comes to 140 million copies, and of magazines, to over 150 million copies. *Pravda*, for instance, has 3.5 times more readers than all the newspapers in pre-revolutionary Russia taken together.

In addition to the central, republic, territorial, regional, town and district newspapers, there are many departmental newspapers published by industrial and transport enterprises,

educational establishments, collective and state farms, army units, and various other organisations.

Soviet readers respect their press for its truthful and frank approach, its intolerant attitude to any violation of the rights and interests of citizens, its severe criticism of errors and shortcomings in all spheres of economic, cultural and public life. The people love their press because it resolutely backs their interests, opposes bureaucracy and irresponsibility, imbues citizens with the noble idea of public duty, and glorifies the champions of everything progressive and advanced.

Back in 1918 Lenin outlined the basic task and function of Soviet newspapers in an article "About the Nature of Our Press". They were to be organs, he said, of the working masses, means of expressing public opinion and educating the builders of a new life. He denounced political waffle, bragging and the excessive repetition of truisms. He called upon the press to study life and pay more attention to everyday things; to publicise and criticise drawbacks and spread news of success.

Lenin pointed out that the principal task of the press during the transition from capitalism to socialism was to educate the masses by taking real, concrete examples from all aspects of life.

"More economics. But not in the sense of 'general' discussions, learned reviews, intellectual plans and similar piffle, for, I regret to say, they are all too often just piffle and nothing more. By economics we mean the gathering, *careful checking* and study of the facts of the actual organisation of the new life. Have *real* successes been achieved by big factories, agricultural communes, the Poor Peasants' Committees, and local Economic Councils in building up the new economy? What, precisely, are these successes? Have they been verified? Are they not fables, boasting, intellectual promises ('things are moving', 'the plan has been drawn up', 'we are getting under way', 'we now vouch for', 'there is undoubted improvement', and other charlatan phrases of which 'we' are such masters)? How have the successes been achieved? What must be done to extend them?"¹

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, pp. 96-97.

Lenin's advice, given in the first few months of the socialist state's existence has not lost any of its significance today. The Communist Party and all Soviet organisations actively support and spread the valuable experience acquired by the working people and reported in their own press.

The critical remarks made by citizens in the newspapers are headed in the same way. The CPSU tries to make sure that all newspapers, big or small, are militant, courageous and full of critical material furnished by workers, collective farmers and office employees. The Communist Party is against all those who stifle criticism in newspapers or come to some agreement about critical articles sent in by public correspondents with the organisations or departments against which the criticism is levelled.

A resolution passed by the CPSU Central Committee in 1954 condemned the Kromy District Party Committee (Orel Region) for ordering the local newspaper to send all critical articles to the district committee so as to obtain the committee secretary's permission before publishing the material. The leaders of that committee wanted to polish up the actual situation and show only the positive aspects of life in their district. They toned down the statements and demanded that the most pointed criticism be crossed out.

The socialist press is an important means of mass control, criticism and self-criticism, and therefore all attempts to obstruct the activity of worker and village correspondents and staff journalists and to conceal from them the actual situation are regarded in the USSR and the other socialist countries as desire to evade public control.

The ability to hearken to the voice of all Soviet citizens and to their critical remarks, even when unwarranted, has long been a tradition with the Soviet press. Here is one of the most typical examples.

In 1926 the *Krestyanskaya Gazeta* passed on a letter from Vladimir Y., a peasant from the village of Dobraya Krinitsa, Odessa Region, to Mikhail Kalinin, the Soviet President. The peasant wrote that he had served in the Red Army from 1922 to 1924 and then after demobilisation had found himself on hard times. Nobody, he complained, seemed to remember his past revolutionary accomplishments.

"I must live, I need means of subsistence, but I have none," he wrote. "I'm a beggar. I went to Nikolayev to register myself in the labour exchange, but they told me: 'Aren't you pretty sharp? Just keep coming for a year or two, and we'll see what we can do for you. There are lots of unemployed as it is.' I told them that I was just demobilised, but they brushed me off, saying that there were plenty of grey-coats like me, and they added that the privileges extended to the demobilised soldiers covered only a period of one year. It's like a blow in the face. It turns out, if I'm not mistaken, that the educated people (and since they are educated, they must be rich or from rich families) continue to prosper just as they did decades and centuries ago."

The peasant concluded thus:

"So, there is no justice. We were slaves and will remain slaves because we are illiterate. I ask you to print this letter in the *Krestyanskaya Gazeta*, thought I'm certain that you'll refuse to do so. If I were to tell you that my neighbour was illicitly distilling liquor, you'd jump on the chance to publish my letter, but not in my case."

"But I hope that Comrade Kalinin will tell me what to do with my revolutionary merits?"

Kalinin replied, and here are some excerpts from his letter.

"In spite of the openly counter-revolutionary character of Vladimir Y.'s letter and in spite of his apprehensions that the letter would not be published, I believe that it would benefit the broad masses to read the letter so that they would see by this example how sometimes people who are not counter-revolutionaries by nature and who consider themselves loyal Soviet citizens, fall back on counter-revolutionary positions in daily, routine matters."

Kalinin's reply was published in the *Krestyanskaya Gazeta* under the heading "Exaggerated Merits and Pretensions for Rewards". Kalinin began with the author:

"I don't see his revolutionary merits. Yes, he was conscripted... Since when the execution of state duties such as military service is counted as revolutionary work which entails special reward?... All pretensions of Vladimir Y. and his demand for particular attention to his person are unfounded. Millions of people lead a beggarly life, a life from hand to mouth... It is not our fault, but our misfor-

tune... But Vladimir Y. is not only dissatisfied with being a beggar, he also counterposes his poverty to the position of those who, at this moment, get more wages than he."

Kalinin analyses the problem thus:

"Let us take up the difference in the wages which we, I and Vladimir Y., get. You want to get from the state as much as I do. Don't you think that you want too much? Our poor state cannot afford that."

"Why, then, our poor state pays in spite of all its poverty comparatively good wages to Kalinin? The reply can be illustrated by a simple example. Why a peasant, when he prepares for a long journey, feeds oats to the mare which is going to pull the cart? Everybody will say that he does so because he doesn't want it to fail him mid-way. As long as Kalinin is Chairman of the Central Executive Council he should be considered as the state's mare which is fed, say, by the fashionable suit which he wears when he receives foreign ambassadors."

"Do you think, Vladimir Y., that the poor peasants would agree that their representatives should become the laughing-stock of the bourgeois world and exhibit their poverty? It is not serious, altogether. If we approach the matter from another aspect, we may say that Vladimir Y. envies Kalinin who at this moment undoubtedly lives better than him. But perhaps Vladimir Y. has a tremendous advantage over Kalinin? Yes, I think, he has. And, I believe, the advantage is very precious. I am 50, I have sung my song, and I notice that my physical strength is going, my thoughts and dreams about my future work are expiring."

"Dear Citizen V.Y. You are blind, you do not see the tremendous wealth in your hands, wealth which becomes particularly precious in Soviet conditions. It is your youth. Do you think that I would grudge anything I have to exchange for what you possess? To strip off 20 years of one's age in the Soviet Republic is something really worthwhile! What can be more precious than that? If you do not know how to employ your wealth, it's your own fault."

"When Vladimir Y. compares himself with us, he must not forget the pay I got at his age, because, it may happen, that at 50 he may also find himself elected, if not chairman of the Union's Central Executive Committee, then chairman

of the Central Executive Committee of one or another Soviet republic, and they all get equal pay."

Kalinin's reply caused a stir. Some of the comments were published in the *Krestyanskaya Gazeta*. The paper received 2,500 letters, including nearly 100 letters from collectives and copies of resolutions they had adopted after discussion. Kalinin made a concluding reply to all these letters. He enumerated the benefits which the working people gained from Soviet power and the benefits that they could expect in the future. Concerning Vladimir Y., who had sent in another letter, Kalinin said that he was "a petty bourgeois decadent who lives by the moment and is easily upset by the impressions of accidental events. . . ."

This is the way the Soviet press patiently explains things to people who really fail to understand something and who want to be convinced of the truth. This is how it answers those who want to stir trouble.

Progressive people in bourgeois countries are often surprised by the critical spirit of the Soviet press. Some even ask: is this sharp and public criticism of errors and shortcomings really necessary? Doesn't it undermine the authority of the leaders?

In the Soviet Union such questions could only be asked by those who want to evade public control. There are few people like that. The broad masses have become convinced in the course of many years' experience that the socialist press expresses and resolutely champions the interests of the people and that when it criticises somebody, society stands to gain.

The anti-communist press, naturally, tries to make use of the critical articles in the Soviet press to slander the Soviet way of life. But the Soviet people take little notice. They keep in mind the Eastern saying: "The dog barks, but the caravan continues on its way". We are well aware that if a society is not afraid of self-criticism, this means that the society is strong and that it is marching forward with confidence.

The flow of letters sent in to newspapers is never-ending. Some of them are critical, bringing up problems that are of common concern. Engineer R. Husainov of the Kazan Compressor Plant, for example, expressed his apprehension at

the unhealthy moral and psychological atmosphere within his collective. It sometimes happens that when a worker dares to criticise his foreman, he has no other way out but to leave the collective. And most of the people that go in this way are good, experienced and honest workers. Such things happen because the chief hates criticism or because the administration backs him up as a good specialist.

The engineer R. Husainov attacked such people in his article "Why Do They Get the Support?" which was published by *Pravda* on August 4, 1971. He spoke with indignation about the fact that worthless chiefs who were not even good specialists were shielded by the administration.

"The chairman of the factory trade-union committee, one Rukavishnikov," wrote the engineer, "was a hard and rude man. He attended to his duties indifferently and would get so caught up in red-tape that it was impossible to try and disentangle him. Besides, he was dishonest. He sold two plots of land with summer cottages, and built himself a dacha by appropriating building materials from the factory. The strange thing was that nobody took any notice! Although he did not even have an engineer's diploma, he was later promoted to the position of factory chief technologist. Yet he remained as rude and snobbish as ever in his relations with people.

"Communists have frequently mentioned Rukavishnikov and the likes of him in *Sovetskaya Tataria*, but such people invariably have found support, particularly from A. Sibhattullin, secretary of the factory's Party Committee. It ends with the authors of the letters getting labelled as intriguers, while Rukavishnikov and Co. continue to thrive."

Husainov concluded his article by saying:

"And so I ask—what's the matter? A man somehow got placed in a responsible position, and it seems awkward to demote him, even though he has compromised himself time and again. People begin to look for excuses and shift the man from one place to another. But, why? Send him to the shop floor to work at a lathe. The 24th Congress of the CPSU made it plain that nobody can expect a high-ranking position to be automatically his for life. We ought never to forget that."

We must keep in mind that sharp criticism and direct

control by citizens appears not only in the central press. Soviet citizens have the right to publish critical articles in any Soviet newspaper. And millions of people make use of this right.

Wall-newspapers are exceptionally popular with the Soviet people. It is well-nigh impossible to ascertain the exact number of wall-newspapers operative in the Soviet Union. They are issued by all shops and sectors of industrial enterprises, by all collective and state farms, by institutions, educational enterprises, trade and communal establishments, clubs and hospitals, libraries and sanatoria, big residential houses and are found everywhere where people work, live and rest together.

Wall-newspapers are an expression of socialist democracy. Every worker, collective farmer or office employee can take part in the wall-newspapers just as in the general press. Wall-newspapers are the place to tell about their achievements, share their thoughts, put forward suggestions, and criticise anything they dislike just as their sense of civic duty prompts them.

The collective is certain to read the articles published in the wall-newspaper. The leaders take note of the ideas and suggestions put forward. The articles give birth to comments and practical action. The wall-newspaper expresses the collective's opinion, and this is why it exercises such a strong influence. In socialist society the wall-newspaper is an important form of the organisation of mass control and criticism from below, from the rank-and-file. Any factory worker has the right to criticise the work of his trade-union committee, its chairman, the management, and the departments in charge of the factory.

The wall-newspapers criticise Party organisations, too, for their mistakes and shortcomings. The criticism comes not only from Communists, but also from non-Party people.

The Communist Parties believe that it is wrong to assume that a man elected to a party committee should be above criticism. He should be shown his mistakes and the citizens should know that newspapers criticise people irrespective of their rank or position and that no allowances are made to members of Party committees. On the contrary.

The CPSU sees control from below and criticism from the

masses as a method of educating the leading officials of all ranks. The Party constantly repeats that there can be no different rules for leaders and for rank-and-file. This principle is laid down in the Rules of the CPSU.

Lenin said that in a democracy politicians conduct their activity openly and before the public eye. People electing a person to a certain post know how the candidate started, how he conducted himself when things were difficult and what his particular qualities are. Thus they are well aware of whether or not he ought to be chosen for this or that position.

"The general control (in the literal sense of the term) exercised over every act of a party man in the political field brings into existence an automatically operating mechanism which produces what in biology is called the 'survival of the fittest'. 'Natural selection' by full publicity, election, and general control provides the assurance that, in the last analysis, every political figure will be 'in his proper place', do the work for which he is best fitted by his powers and abilities, feel the effects of his mistakes on himself, and prove before all the world his ability to recognise mistakes and to avoid them."¹

The entire work of the huge army of worker and village correspondents representing both the big and small newspapers is governed by Lenin's idea of general control over every act of every official whether he is a Communist or not.

This basic idea was expressed particularly clearly in the decision which the Central Committee of the Communist Party adopted on August 27, 1926, on the routine tasks of the movement of worker and village correspondents. According to this resolution it is more correct to say that the wall-newspapers are organs of the workers of the given enterprise or the farmers of the given village than of the enterprise or organisation itself. This underlines the fact that such newspapers are the organs and rostrums of the masses.

The wall-newspapers, just as the printed ones, invite their contributors to take part in the *mass inspections* conducted by worker and village correspondents, which are very popular among working people. These inspections are

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 478.

arranged to check a particular production sector, the fulfilment of an urgent order or the decisions of the administration and public organisations. The collected information is published in the newspaper. The inspections conducted by correspondents do not have an official character; they are not conducted to lay down in writing a statement of the findings. The people taking part in the inspections have neither a mandate nor any administrative rights. Their duty is to study the particular situation in depth, consult experienced people, generalise from their findings, discover the reasons and the guilty persons behind the shortcomings and draw the necessary conclusions.

There are many on the spot *worker and village correspondents* in the Soviet Union. They function in those sectors which the active members of the newspaper consider most important. They regularly furnish the newspapers with the necessary data, supply information of any shortcomings in their sectors, act to improve the situation and recruit new correspondents for the newspaper.

The printed and wall newspapers regularly call their correspondents and readers to conferences where the plans of the editorial staff are discussed, errors criticised and measures to improve the work drawn up. Soviet citizens are in a word the full masters of their press; they want every word which is spoken from their democratic rostrum to hit the mark and produce results.

The Communist Party makes every opportunity for professional journalists and worker and village correspondents to speak about their worries in the press and to raise problems of public interest. The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have rejected the stale tradition of the bourgeois press according to which the author scribbles and the reader turns over the leaves. The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have created a new, people's press, where words are backed by action.

Countless examples could be given to show the force of the socialist press. It is hard to find an issue of a wall or printed newspaper that does not include announcements of measures taken following signals from worker or village correspondents.

In the spring of 1919, the Eighth Congress of the Commu-

nist Party pointed out that people or organisations whose actions are criticised in a newspaper should either publish within short notice a businesslike refutation of the offence attributed to them or give information of the steps taken to correct the mistakes.

Socialist society does not tolerate people who ignore the press, nor does it approve of hureaucrats and officials who strive to conceal their mistakes from the public. The socialist laws protect correspondents from being persecuted for their critical statements in newspapers. People who attempt to stifle criticism in the press are strictly punished.

All this confirms the idea that the press in the socialist countries is an effective form of citizens' direct control over the work of the managing bodies and public organisations.

THE HISTORIC INEVITABILITY OF DEMOCRATIC CHANGES

After the victory of the 1917 October Socialist Revolution in Russia the ideas of socialism captured the minds of people everywhere.

Workers' control and the abolition of capitalist ownership of the means of production became popular demands among the working people of Western Europe. In many European countries under the influence of the first decrees of the Soviet Government the halo and the idea of 'sanctity' surrounding private property evaporated.

Looking back over the historic experience of the Soviet state, Lenin believed that as far as several basic questions of socialist revolution were concerned all countries would have to follow Russia's example.

In the book *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* Lenin wrote that Bolshevism can be taken by everyone as a lesson in tactics. Stressing the significance of general laws, he noted at the same time the many different transitional forms between capitalism and socialism.

"All nations will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable," Lenin wrote in *A Caricature of Marxism*, "but all will do so in not exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformations in the different aspects of social life."¹

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, pp. 69-70.

The experience of the countries of people's democracy that took the road to the new life has confirmed the prophecy of the leader of the Russian revolution. This practice, as Lenin noted, indicates that "certain fundamental features of our revolution have a significance that is not local, or peculiarly national, or Russian alone, but international . . . taking international significance to mean the international validity or the historical inevitability of a repetition, on an international scale, of what has taken place in our country."¹

The international significance of the October Revolution, according to Lenin, lies in the solution offered to such radical problems as the dictatorship of the proletariat, the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, the leading role of the Communist Party in the system of the proletarian power and socialist construction, industrialisation and the socialist remodelling of rural life and the cultural revolution.

At the same time the practice of proletarian revolution and the construction of a new society in the socialist countries shows that their Communist and Workers' Parties are aware of the specific historical features of the different countries. In solving problems that are international they nevertheless take into account the national and state peculiarities, the progressive traditions and customs of their peoples.

Take, for example, the People's Republic of Bulgaria where the *National Front* is the country's major public and political organisation. The Front can enact laws on problems which concern the entire population and can control enterprises, institutions and organisations responsible for communal, social and cultural services, for the modernisation of settlements, supply, and so on.

The work of the People's Councils, which are the most representative and democratic organs of power, closest to the people, is constantly refreshed by new ideas. Their role in the system of social management is growing. Democratic principles are gaining a greater importance in the work of People's Councils; their status and responsibility in the management of the local economy, of social, cultural and communal services are increasing. In other words, conditions are most favourable for the broad development of

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 21.

the independence and initiative of the People's Councils which are concurrently local organs of state power and of public self-government.

Bulgaria just as the other socialist countries is eliminating the narrowing influence that the executive councils used to have on the functioning of legislative bodies.

In socialist countries there can be no actual or formal division of power. The practice of representative institutions engaging mostly in general supervision and control while the solution of concrete questions was completely in the hands of executive organs did not prove efficient. This is why the representative institutions, as instruments of the people's sovereignty, not only take decisions on all basic social problems, but also organise their execution and control their implementation.

The trade unions of the People's Republic of Bulgaria are becoming organs of workers' self-government and mass organisations of state management of production. Their functions have been extended and their participation in the planning of the national economy, the drafting of labour and social laws and of decisions on principal questions concerning the everyday life of the worker is also growing.

The trade unions supervise the normal running of economic committees, the collectively elected leading organs of enterprises. They work with the economic committee in endorsing instructions on the principles of pay, of raising the skill of workers and office employees and on improving working conditions. They can suspend any illegal orders given by the management which concerns the rights of workers and office employees, and they can ask higher authorities to interfere.

In the Socialist Republic of Rumania there are administrative organs composed of specialists, executives and worker representatives which implement the principle of collective leadership and strengthen public control.

The enterprises have set up management committees—organs of collective leadership. Each committee includes the director, his deputies, the chiefs of some of the departments and most important production sectors, the chairman of the trade-union organisation, and from one to five representatives from among the workers and office employees who

are elected at general meetings of the enterprise. The management committee acts as an administrative organ and takes decisions by majority vote.

In Rumania the trade unions take active part in drafting the country's home and foreign policy, in working out the scientific principles of economic development, analysing basic state problems, and developing the economy and culture.

The representatives of trade unions, vested with all the corresponding rights and duties, take part in the work of collective administration organs of ministries, industrial enterprises, institutions and of economic as well as public organisations such as university senates, scientific councils of research institutes and the like.

The general meeting at an enterprise is a body which jointly takes decisions and is collectively responsible for the management and organisation of production. These meetings have acquired experience on how to control the work of the management. They supervise the implementation of suggestions put forward by the working people.

The trade unions in the Mongolian People's Republic are responsible for the improvement of working conditions, the mechanisation of hard manual labour, and for labour productivity. They supervise safety measures, control the distribution of overalls, free meals and milk to people working in hazardous conditions. They take part in controlling the work of the state social security system and manage all the houses of culture, clubs, stationary and mobile cinema units attached to enterprises.

One of the constitutional rights of the trade unions in the Hungarian People's Republic is that they influence, give their consent and in some cases fix the rules applying to improving living and working conditions. They have the right to veto measures which contradict the existing laws, collective agreements or the norms of socialist morality. Such scope provides the trade unions with a legal guarantee that enables them to perform their functions. This is an undeniable proof of the independence of the Hungarian trade unions.

When the people's democracies were in the process of setting up their organs of state and public control they

availed themselves of the experience of the Soviet Union while taking into account their particular concrete historic conditions.

During the liberation from the nazi invaders the Communist and Workers' Parties of these countries took advantage of the experience of the October Revolution in Russia and urged the workers to establish control over enterprises, guard against looting and destruction and to restrict the actions of capitalists. The appeals were heeded by the proletariat and helped to increase the political activity of the masses in the struggle for the new social and state system.

The creative work of the masses in setting up the organs of workers' control was officially endorsed by legislative acts.

In Poland the first draft decree on workers' control was elaborated at the end of October 1944. Its main theses were published in early January the following year.

In an article devoted to the draft law, the member of the Interim Central Council of Trade Unions, S. Kalinowski wrote that "the main task of the factory committees will be the direct influence on production. . . . They will exert a tremendous influence on the economic structure and the productive potentialities of industrial enterprises".¹

In February 1945 the Polish Council of Ministers released a decree on the creation of production councils which envisaged the creation at enterprises of 20 workers and office employees or more of production councils as part of the trade-union organisation. The interests of workers at enterprises of 5 to 20 employees were to be represented by a system of delegates.

These production councils and delegates were to be elected both at private and at state and communal enterprises. Their representatives were to be included on the administrative boards of state enterprises. The decree indicated that the councils and delegates were to be elected by secret ballot for a term of one year or for one season at enterprises where work was seasonal. The number of council members depended on the number of workers.

The production councils were to see that the work of

¹ *Głos ludu*, Jan. 11, 1945, No. 10.

factory administrations did not run counter to the interests of the state and its economic policy; they were made responsible for the condition of equipment and were to take part in determining the rates of pay and examine questions of hire, discharge and work conditions. The councils had the right to approve the work schedule and act as mediators in all conflicts between the workers and employers.

The decree obliged the factory managements to call, at least once a month, joint conferences with production councils in order to examine the more urgent problems, such as higher labour productivity, introduction of new machines and production methods, work discipline, organisation of safety and sanitary measures. Every three months the management had to furnish the production councils with a report on the situation at the enterprise.

The wide powers enjoyed by the production councils served as a foundation for the participation of worker collectives in the management of production. They opened up the way for further revolutionary changes in the country's economy.

There was a marked difference between the role and significance of workers' control at state and private enterprises. At state enterprises the production councils directly participated in running production and took decisions on all problems together with the management. In private enterprises they performed the functions of active workers' control, supervised production, guarded the interests of the state and suppressed all attempts of sabotage by the bourgeoisie and its henchmen.

In Czechoslovakia workers' control over production was established in the first few months after the victory of the revolution. This development sprang from the revolutionary initiative of the masses, guided by the *Košice Programme*.

The Czech situation differed from the Polish in that workers' control was actually advocated by representatives of the bourgeoisie who hoped to pass a law restricting the rights of workers in enterprises. But it was the *Central Council of Trade Unions* that took the initiative in drafting the law on control which was obviously not to the taste of the bourgeoisie.

This proposal became the centre of a sharp struggle. When it was discussed by the government Antonín Zápotocký,

speaking on behalf of the Central Council of Trade Unions, told the ministers representing the bourgeois parties that even if they were displeased with the project there was no use in arguing. The workers as it was, he said, enjoyed sufficient rights in the enterprises even without this particular law. His statement had a sobering effect. On October 24, 1945, the President signed the decree on factory councils as it had been drafted by the Central Council of Trade Unions.

The decree obliged the factory managements and factory councils to act in close contact and work together to ensure uninterrupted work at the enterprises.

The duties of the factory councils were set down as follows: defence of the economic, social and cultural interests of employees; supervision of production work to see that it corresponded to the general economic interests and economic laws; attempts to ensure the best production results; co-ordination of production work with the state's social and political interests; and the submission of regular reports to the general factory meetings on the work accomplished.

The factory councils had the right to take part in the solution of all problems related to the conditions and protection of labour, hire and dismissals; the drafting and implementation of production and commercial plans and their co-ordination with the country's general economic plan; they had the right to supervise the technical, administrative and economic aspects of work and offer suggestions for improvements; they might call general meetings of workers and office employees and discuss the various problems concerned with the work of the enterprise. The factory management was obliged to pay considerable attention to the suggestions put forward by the factory councils and furnish information and explanations concerning all problems. The members of the factory councils could take part in all conferences called by the factory management.

The workers and office employees elected the factory councils by secret ballot. The administration was forbidden to transfer members of factory councils to other jobs or dismiss them without the council's permission. The same ruling was applied in respect to the former members of factory councils for a period of two years after their term of service had ended.

In Yugoslavia workers' control came into being as an expression of the revolutionary creativity of the masses, and was given legal status in the Law on Workers' Representatives which was adopted in July 1945. These representatives were elected at all capitalist, co-operative and state enterprises with five or more workers. They represented the interests of workers and office employees on all questions. They were to work in contact with the managers of enterprises and trade-union organisations and make recommendations aimed at the improvement of the organisation of production, efficient operation of equipment, raising the quality of output, etc.

In November 1945 the law was amended and supplemented by new clauses enlarging the role of the representatives. Henceforward it was their duty to defend the social, economic and cultural interests of workers and office employees, help the management in the correct organisation of production and work discipline, control the organisation of production and the fulfilment of plans, etc.

In Hungary the work of factory committees was at first supported only by the revolutionary initiative of the working people. In February 1945 the Minister of Industry released a directive on the factory committees in capitalist enterprises which legalised workers' control over production.

Enterprises with 50 and more employees elected factory committees, and all other enterprises elected representatives. Committees were to deal with all questions concerning the conditions and organisation of labour.

The owners of enterprises were obliged to report once every three months to the factory committees on the production work and the economic position of their enterprises. In joint-stock and co-operative enterprises the representatives of factory committees could take part with deliberative votes in conferences of directors or shareholders.

The directive on factory committees gave the workers broad rights, contributed to the consolidation of the people's democratic government and went a long way to restrict the rights of the capitalists; it also helped workers to learn how to manage production.

In the summer of 1945 the workers' control in Hungary began to spread further and rapidly covered enterprises with

up to 20 workers; the number of factory committees was more than doubled. Workers' control was established in all state factories and plants, excepting railways and post offices. The committees were given greater rights. They could inspect business documents with the exception of those which concerned production secrets. All documents relating to the prospects of development and to other vital problems were considered null and void unless signed by the representatives of factory committees.

The laws on workers' control in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia took into account the historical peculiarities of each of these countries and the economic situation in which the people's democratic revolutions were taking place. At the same time the basic principles had much in common with Lenin's decree on workers' control in Soviet Russia.

In Bulgaria after the establishment of trade-union organisations in factories and plants the functions of workers' control over production were taken over by the trade unions. In the middle of March 1945 the First (constituent) Congress of the General Workers' Trade Union appealed to its members to mobilise all efforts to restore production.

The distinctive feature of workers' control over production in Rumania was the fact that from August 1944 to March 1945, during these first six months following the country's liberation, the bourgeoisie offered open opposition. And control could not be established at all enterprises. The main reason for this was that the government was in the hands of the henchmen of big bourgeoisie who were attempting to push the country along the road of capitalist development.

When the democratic government came to power in Rumania workers' control was established at all industrial enterprises. Its functions were carried out by the production commissions of the factory committees. The Executive Committee of the General Confederation of Labour set up a special commission on the documentation and management of production which was to direct the work of the organs of workers' control.

In Bulgaria and Rumania public control was supplement-

ed by state control and this helped the people's government in carrying out fundamental social and economic changes.

The people's democratic government in Bulgaria, encouraging and directing the work of the organs of workers' control in industry, at the same time intensified control over the capitalist mode of the distribution of raw materials, over the establishment of prices on manufactured goods and the determination of their assortment and quality, etc. The Declaration of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Workers' (Communist) Party "On the Party's Economic Policy", which was announced on September 28, 1945, envisaged support to those capitalists who were ready to co-operate with the people's government. The decree stressed, however, that in the existing conditions the country's industrialisation and welfare could not be reached without the interference, guidance and control of the state.

When early in 1947 the law on the two-year economic development plan was adopted the state began to fix planned assignments for private enterprises. State control helped the people's government to mobilise the economic means owned by the industrial bourgeoisie for the restoration of the national economy, to suppress sabotage, and restrict economic chaos.

In Rumania in July 1947 a special body, the Department of State Economic Control, was set up to implement general control. It had branch offices in towns and districts and sent its representatives to all the major enterprises.

In Erfurt in East Germany a conference of enterprise production councils was held in September 1945 which determined the basic tasks to be tackled in the field of production control. The conference's suggestions were widely discussed at enterprises, and then summed up and approved by the economic conference. The production councils received the right to take part in the solution of all questions relating to the work of the enterprise and to supply and marketing.

By the summer of 1946 production councils were established at all enterprises. The following data show their mass nature: some 118,000 people were elected to the councils by

two million workers. This democratic measure, which was considered very important by the Communist Party and the trade unions, has fully justified itself.

The production councils focused their main attention on the organisation of production, labour productivity, thrifty utilisation of raw and other materials, and prevention of sabotage. In the period between 1945 and 1947 the councils were actually engaged not only in control work, but also in the management of production. Later, as the people's enterprises became more organised and one-man management began to spread, the functions of production councils in this sphere were restricted. The running of enterprises was placed in the hands of economic leaders who had gained experience in the production councils. The interests of workers were represented by trade-union organisations which also took up problems of labour protection and social security.

The production councils played an important role in East Germany's private enterprises. They carried out the functions of workers' control, supervised the fulfilment of plans, observance of pay laws, labour protection and social security. The entrepreneurs were obliged to present information on any questions in which the councils showed interest.

The Labour Law passed in April 1950 by the Interim Parliament of the German Democratic Republic opened up new prospects for the active participation of millions of workers and office employees in public and economic life and gave them the right to control the people's enterprises through the agency of trade unions. The trade-union committees supervised the observance of laws. The law covered private enterprises, as well. It obliged the entrepreneurs to inform the trade-union committees of all problems concerned with production and management. Thus the rights of trade unions to control private enterprises were officially recognised.

In the people's democracies workers' control over production represents a revolutionary measure of the proletariat. It has helped to develop the creative activity of the working people, strengthened their class solidarity and political conscientiousness, and prepared the way for the socialisation of production and the complete victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie in the economic field.

The facts we spoke of show that, just as in Soviet Russia, workers' control in the people's democracies played an important role in saving industry from ruin, in organising production, fighting the acts of sabotage carried out by the bourgeoisie and in preparing the socialisation of the means of production.

Successes in the field of social, political and economic transformations helped the liberated peoples of the countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe to pass over from workers' control to mass, people's control in all spheres of state and public life.

It was with this very aim that reorganisation of control was carried out in some of the European socialist countries at the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s. This reorganisation was based on the principle of the unification of state and public control and the principle of mass participation in control. The Programme of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, which was adopted in 1963, maintains that "the workers' and peasants' control must develop on a broad public basis. Ultimately state and public control will become a single organ of inspection, which will attract increasingly wider layers of the population".¹

The Law on the Supreme Control Chamber of the Polish People's Republic, adopted in December 1957, has this to say: "In implementing its tasks, the Supreme Control Chamber co-operates with the commissions of people's councils, trade unions, workers' councils, co-operative and public organisations, and they sponsor the organisation of control campaigns."²

The laws which regulate the work of control organs in the socialist countries indicate that in spite of all the peculiarities and differences in the structure and naming of control organs, they have basic principles of organisation and activity in common.

This applies primarily to the democratic nature of con-

¹ The Programme of the SUPG, Part Two, Chapter IV. See Walter Ulbricht, Referat, Schlusswort. "Programm der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands", (The Programme of Socialism and the Historic Tasks of the SUPG), Berlin, 1963, S. 354.

² *Dziennik Ustaw*, December 1957, p. 330.

trol, which principle finds expression in the direct participation of working people in check-ups and investigations, in the rules governing the establishment of control organs, the inclusion of representatives of public organisations, of the peasantry and the intelligentsia, and, finally, in the creation of inspections and groups of controllers on a voluntary basis in central and local control organs.

In most of the socialist countries the organs of control are elected. In the Hungarian People's Republic the Central Commission of People's Control is elected by the Republic's Presidium, and the lower commissions, by the local organs of state power. The Central People's Control Commission in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is elected by the National Assembly, the regional and district commissions, by meetings of elected delegates, and the factory and similar commissions, by meetings of the working people.

The basic tasks of the control organs in the socialist countries are the same: control over the observance of laws and government decrees by the organs of state management and all other organisations, the fulfilment of national economic plans, and improvement of the working of the state apparatus and of state discipline.

The Supreme Control Chamber of the Polish People's Republic, for example, controls the economic, financial, organisational and administrative work of the local and higher organs of state administration. It studies the work of the apparatus to check its observance of the law and ensure that it is working hard and pursuing an economical and rational policy, it controls the state budget and the fulfilment of economic plans, safeguards socialist property and sees that financial discipline is maintained.

According to the Decision of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and the Council of Ministers of the German Democratic Republic on the Organisation of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, "the task of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is to contribute unequivocally to the fulfilment of the Programme of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, organise systematic socialist control over the actual implementation of decisions and directives, help the improvement of planning and leader-

ship of the national economy, strengthen state discipline and socialist laws."¹

Workers' control in all the socialist countries is typified by its continuous nature, its effectiveness and by the fact that it is conducted very much in the public view. At the same time the system in each country has its own peculiarities.

For example, in Czechoslovakia to be a member of a commission of people's control while concurrently occupying a responsible position in an organ or organisation which the given committee controls is considered out of concern for objectivity. In Hungary the discharge of a member of a control commission from his regular work is subject to approval by the commission of people's control.

The rights of the control organs also vary. In the Hungarian People's Republic the general rights of control organs are stipulated. It is specified that the heads of the controlled organisations are obliged to furnish the necessary documents, give explanations, etc. The commission can only make suggestions to the head of an institution or organisation with a view to the elimination of shortcomings or ordering a guilty man to compensate the loss he caused the state. In Bulgaria the organs of control have the right to order the administration to take the necessary steps to eliminate any violations within a fixed time-limit, punish the guilty workers and make them compensate for any loss.

The practice of attracting the working masses to control work in Hungary is quite specific. The control commissions mobilise workers and office employees as well as commission members for participation in investigations. The management works out beforehand its proposals of how best its employees can be used as people's controllers. The commissions study the suggestions which, once approved, have to be followed by the management.

The workers' and peasants' inspection in the GDR is a good illustration of the present system of people's control in the European socialist countries.

Supported by mass organisations and state organs, the

¹ *Gesetzblatt der DDR*, Teil II, 1963, No. 40, S. 262.

workers' and peasants' inspection is now the country's most important organ of public and state control.

The workers, co-operative farmers, representatives of the intelligentsia and other people who take part in the activity of the workers' and peasants' inspection together with trade-union controllers, control groups of the Union of Free German Youth and members of the Democratic Union of Women help the implementation of the programme of socialist changes within the GDR. They effectively control the carrying out of Party and government decisions, help the fulfilment of state plans and strengthen state discipline and the observance of socialist laws.

The Committee of WPI directs the work of inspecting the national economy and the large plants, as well as the running of its local organisations. The regional, district and town committees of the WPI and the people's control commissions mobilise economic reserves, raise labour productivity and reduce production costs.

The WPI organs give reports of their work at general workers' meetings and provide people with information through the press and over the radio and television in order to summarise experience, spread its valuable lessons and prevent any kinds of violation.

The organisational structure of the WPI organs in the GDR from top to bottom is as follows: the Committee of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, regional, district and town committees, inspections of branches and plants, commissions and groups of WPI at enterprises and institutions, and in towns and communities constitute a single system of control.

The WPI Committee works in close co-operation with the National Council of the National Front and the leadership of mass organisations so as to co-ordinate public control and ensure the mutual co-operation of the various sections.

The WPI Committee consists of chairman, secretary, deputy chairmen, the leading officials of state organisations (Central Statistical Board, arbitration, price department, financial inspection, the industrial and trade bank, and other organisations), deputy chairman of the National Council of the National Front, secretaries of the central

boards of trade unions, youth and women's organisations, press representatives, workers, co-operative farmers and scientists.

The people's plants which are subordinate either to central or local authorities have inspection commissions headed, as a rule, by staff officials. These commissions are collective organs, their members elected at meetings of working people for a term of two years.

The WPI commissions at enterprises and in institutions and the public control commissions in towns and communes constitute the public foundation of the workers' and peasants' inspection. Their most important task is to attract as many people as possible to control work. At big enterprises WPI groups can be set up in shops, sectors and departments.

When necessary, the WPI commissions are established in agricultural production co-operatives; they work in co-operation with the inspection commissions of the co-operatives and the public control commissions in villages.

Groups of people's control can be set up in large urban districts. They focus their attention on the supply of consumer goods and communal services.

The WPI committees and the inspections in plants and industrial branches *have the following rights:*

They can order the elimination of shortcomings within fixed time limits, suggest that officials account for their activity before the corresponding state and public organs, insist on economic sanctions and deductions of illicit profits into the state budget; examine all documents and materials of the organisation under inspection, and ask for written explanations; ask that people who have contributed to the building of socialism be rewarded; demand the punishment of those who furnish incorrect information, conceal shortcomings, violate socialist laws or squander public funds; suspend the implementation of orders and measures which contradict the decisions of the Central Committee of the SUPG and the Council of Ministers; demand compensation for losses caused to the state, to an enterprise, co-operative or other public organisation; impose disciplinary or administrative punishment and, if need be, ask for the removal of officials from their posts.

The organs of state and public control in the other socialist countries are organised along similar lines.

The Soviet Union, true to the principles of proletarian internationalism, friendship and mutual assistance in the building of socialism and communism, shares its experience, including that gained in control work, with the other socialist countries. Delegations of the control organs in the fraternal countries visit the Soviet Union, and representatives of the People's Control Committee of the USSR go to the socialist countries. The press is also widely employed for the same purpose.

The mutual exchange of experience helps improve the system of control organs and their work and attract more people to the control of the administrative apparatus. In June 1971, the chairman of the Central People's Control Commission of the Hungarian People's Republic headed a delegation to the Soviet Union. This is what he said:

"We set up organs of people's control thirteen years ago. This work is also guided by Leninist principles. But we have less experience.

"The Central Commission of People's Control is elected once every four years by the Presidium of the Republic, and the regional and district commissions, by the corresponding councils. Only the chairmen and their deputies are staff workers. All the other members do their work on a voluntary basis.

"There are 40,000 people's controllers in Hungary. They were recommended by Party and trade-union organisations from among the most advanced and conscientious citizens. In 1970 they undertook more than 6,000 separate investigations, of which 25 were reported to the Party's Central Committee and the Hungarian Government which took decisions on the materials furnished.

"Our organs of people's control have no right to take punitive measures, they can only ask that guilty persons be punished. Such applications are examined immediately. If we are dissatisfied with the steps taken, we can apply to the superior bodies. Up to now we have had no need to use this right.

"When an enterprise makes illicit profits by selling bad products, raising prices, etc., we apply to the State Arbitra-

tion and ask the profits to be deducted and added to the state budget. When we find that in a certain case capital investments are inexpedient, overstated or underutilised, we have the right to stop further investments.

"It sometimes happens that we are obstructed in our work. In such cases we have the right to temporarily relieve the executives of the organisation we inspect of their duties. The higher authority must clear up the situation within a month's time and punish the guilty person. The superior body can restore the man to office, but we have the right to protest if we disagree with the decision. So far we have not employed this right because a dismissed official has never been restored to his former job.

"Every year we give an account of our work to Parliament; the regional and district organs of people's control report to the corresponding local councils.

"The people's controllers get temporary warrants for investigations; they thus become representatives of the state. We have the right to engage the services of a people's controller for a month's period every year. During the time he gets the full pay he receives at his regular job.

"The Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party asked us to examine the services extended to working women, the time they take to go to work, whether they work in night shifts, and whether there are enough kindergartens, after-school groups in schools, and so on.

"The Party's Central Committee studied our data and suggestions attentively and they were brought up at the Party Congress, in the press and at public meetings. The Party and the Government took a special decision on the matter.

"Our people's controllers were glad to learn that the information they had collected was appreciated by all sections of the population. Once again the great role of public initiative in building socialism in Hungary was proved."

It remains only to be said that the great force of public initiative and genuine democracy is in evidence in all the socialist countries. The Communist and Workers' Parties of

the socialist countries attach great importance to this development.

Leonid Brezhnev noted that the socialist democracy in action "is the right of every citizen, every collective and every Republic to take part in deciding questions of social life, combating any departures from the rules and principles of socialist community living, criticising shortcomings and taking an active part in eliminating them. To enable Soviet citizens to enjoy their rights to the fullest, the Party has shown constant concern to improve the forms of popular representation and people's control over the activity of the organs of power and administration".¹

This concern is shown not only in the Soviet Union, but in all the socialist countries. The guiding role of the Marxist-Leninist parties is strengthened, the forms and methods of governing socialist society constantly improved, and a creative approach taken to the solution of the urgent problems of the development of democracy.

* * *

Socialism has taken a strong hold in many parts of the world. It has displayed its ability to ensure a planned and smooth development of the economy, guarantee the social and political rights of the working people, and create conditions for the real participation of the people's masses in governing the society.

This increases the impact of socialism on the working people of the whole world, indicates the way to fight the system of exploitation and oppression and the tyranny of the monopolies.

The struggle for the democratisation of the economy, for democratic control in the social and economic fields is acquiring great importance in the developed capitalist countries.

The concentration and centralisation of production and of capital is gaining momentum. This is one of the chief

¹ L. I. Brezhnev, *Lenin's Cause Lives On and Triumphs*, Moscow, 1970, p. 44.

economic features of modern capitalism. The gigantic process of socialisation is becoming universal.

The basic contradiction of dying capitalism, the contradiction between the exceptional possibilities opened up by the scientific and technological revolution, on the one hand, and the obstacles which the social system sets in the way of employing them in the interests of the people, on the other, is becoming more pronounced and more persistent. It is no secret that capitalism employs most of its scientific discoveries and tremendous material resources for military purposes, and squanders in this way the national wealth.

The contradiction between the social character of modern production and the state-monopolist nature of the society regulating it, the contradiction between labour and capital is becoming more acute. The antagonism between the interests of the great majority of the people and the financial oligarchies is increasing.

All this compels the progressive forces, and in particular the workers' movement, to fight for the employment of the social economy in the interests of the rational development of the productive forces, i.e., in the interests of the producers of material benefits.

The working people are trying to influence the economic policy of the monopolies; they oppose the policy of plundering the people. It is not surprising that strikers are more often raising the demand that they be given full rights at their enterprises and control over the actions of entrepreneurs and over social and economic policy.

In the meantime the apologists of imperialism, the rightist socialist theoreticians and rabid anti-Communists blow their trumpets about the "evolution" of capitalism and about "neocapitalism". They repeat the conjectures of bourgeois science about the disappearance of traditional bourgeois property in present "transformed" capitalism, and its conversion into the property of the multitude of shareholders.

Proceeding from this point of view they proclaim that the main problem is not property, but the question of control over economic activity, the question of "economic power". They declare that it is the technocrats, the

directors of enterprises and corporations, top-level officials, experts, and so on who hold the power in their hands.

Therefore, according to them, it is not a matter of the grip of the monopolies, but of "managerialism", not a question of capitalist big pots, who dictate terms to the bourgeois rulers, but of the technocrats. And since it is impossible to get along in modern economy without qualified and centralised leadership, the problem of economic power, say these neothereoticians, boils down to control over the technocrats. They exclude, it turns out, the fight against bourgeois property and speak only about the problems of directing the economy.

The ideologists and leaders of social reformism are compelled to take into account that the mass workers' movement no longer restricts itself to demanding the improvement of work conditions and higher pay. The movement is armed with different slogans nowadays.

The workers and office employees in the capitalist countries actively fight for the right to take part in the solution of major problems concerned with the work of enterprises and corporations, including the organisation of production management, distribution of profits, employment, etc. They want to take part in the solution of the fundamental problems of national economic policies.

These are far-reaching social demands. They are extremely dangerous for the powers that be. The satisfaction of such demands could play an important role in the transition towards fundamental social change. The readers of this book, I hope, will remember the pages dedicated to the great significance of control during the first Russian revolution of 1905 and the victorious October Socialist Revolution of 1917.

Fearing similar results, the rightist socialist leaders and all the enemies of social progress publicise the demagogic slogans of "democratic control" over capitalist economy, and of the imaginary participation of trade union and other organisations in the solution of economic problems, etc.

They are attempting to water down the militant demands of the working people in the capitalist countries; the empty phrases about "participation" are used as a means of implementing the notorious policy of integrating the pro-

letariat in the system of state and monopoly capitalism. The enemies of socialism carefully by-pass everything that could be regarded as an attempt on the property of monopolies or a wish to do away with the exploitation of the working people.

They substitute the revolutionary transformation of bourgeois society with the reformist doctrine of "democratic socialism" which in essence is nothing but a variant of the ill-famed theory of "convergence". The latter retains the principles of bourgeois law and order and envisages the "elimination" of the unavoidable and basic contradictions of capitalism.

The contemporary bourgeois ideologists and revisionists realise perfectly well the magnetic and revolutionary influence which socialist democracy exerts on all the working people of the world. This is why they are trying to distort its real nature, belittle its historic role and even to counterpose socialism and democracy.

The ideologists of imperialism are trying to present the modern bourgeois democracy as the political norm; they hide the sway of the monopolies by phrases of "full" and "pure" democracy. It is no coincidence that the supporters of such democracy believe that the so-called authoritarian socialism ought to draw closer to the bourgeois democracy and turn into "democratic socialism".

In his time Lenin made clear that this slogan was "an awful theoretical muddle, ... a complete renunciation of Marxism".¹

Practice has proved the correctness of Lenin's verdict. The events in Czechoslovakia have shown what follows the implementation of this slogan in practice—the undermining of the ideological foundation of socialism, the deformation of its political and economic structure, the poisoning of the masses with the venom of nationalism, and the appearance of counter-revolutionary organisations.

The slogan is a trap which the reaction uses to corrupt the socialist state, paralyse public activities and plot against the revolution. It is easy to perceive that in spite of the difference in their initial positions, the anti-Communist

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol 28, p. 232.

theory of "totalitarianism" and the reformist doctrine of "democratic socialism" form, in the final analysis, a single anti-Marxist ideological platform.

Marxism-Leninism has scientifically shown the way in which democracy is dependent on social, economic and class factors. Instead of the abstract approach to the problems of democracy the Communist and Workers' Parties offer a dialectic and materialistic interpretation and a concretely historic evaluation of the significance and role of democracy with regard to the stage of social development and the correlation of class forces.

The problems of democracy are widely discussed by various circles in the capitalist countries. The bourgeois press incessantly slanders socialist democracy concocting one falsehood after the other. Hand in hand with the revisionists they show hypocritical concern for the "improvement" of socialism, for its "democratisation". The Central Committee's Report to the 24th Congress of the CPSU said in respect to these unmasked advisers who shed crocodile tears about the fate of socialism: "A vain, useless venture. Soviet people have their own democracy, a socialist democracy, with their own principles and traditions for developing it. There is no freedom in general, just as there is no democracy in general. This is a class concept. That is how Lenin put the question, and that is how our Party puts it today. We see the meaning and content of socialist democracy in the increasingly broader participation of the masses in the administration of state and social affairs. In our country the entire political system of society and the steadily growing initiative of the people serve the building of communism. This sort of democracy is vital to us and it is an indispensable condition for the development and consolidation of socialist social relations."¹

All the progressive sections of capitalist society defend genuine democracy, its humane essence, its realism, and its material, political and juridical guarantees. They fight for democratic control over the economy because this is one of the effective means of waging the general struggle of the

¹ 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971. p. 99.

working people for their emancipation from exploitation and for social progress.

In France the workers demand the right to participate in the management of production through the agency of factory committees which were set up in 1945 when the broad democratic movement had gained momentum.

The Italian Communist Party insists on the establishment of democratic control by the nationalisation of the major monopolies.

The British Communists support the working people's struggle for the democratisation of the management of nationalised branches of economy and for the participation of workers in the control organs and the management of production.

In order to ensure democracy and social progress in West Germany, writes Max Reimann, the leader of that country's Communist Party, "it is necessary to undermine the influence of concerns and banks and ensure the realisation of trade-union decisions on granting the working people the right to participate in the management of enterprises, the entire economy and the state, and to take part in working out the political line".¹

Addressing the 24th Congress of the CPSU, Georges Marchais, General Secretary of the French Communist Party, said:

"Our policy is laid down in the Party's manifesto 'For Advanced Democracy, for Socialist France'. It mobilises the people's masses for the struggle, unprecedented in scope, against the policy and domination of monopolies so as to win radical democratic changes which in the near future would pose the question of transition to socialism. We want to come to power in an alliance with the other Left parties not to administer the affairs of the bourgeoisie, but to thwart the omnipotence of monopolies, and to open the road to socialism."²

The Communist and Workers' Parties of the capitalist

¹ Max Reimann, *The Influence of the Great October on the Working People of Germany. The Attitude to the Soviet Union is the Vital Question of our Nation*, (Russ. ed.), Moscow, 1957, p. 132.

² *Pravda*, April 1, 1971.

countries advocate the establishment of democratic control over the economy and, at the same time, they criticise the reformist attempts to deprive the movement for the democratisation of the economy of its revolutionary content.

"In contrast to the Right and 'Left' opportunists, the Communist and Workers' Parties do not counterpose the fight for deep-going economic and social demands, and for advanced democracy to the struggle for socialism, but regard it as a part of the struggle for socialism. The radical democratic changes which will be achieved in the struggle against the monopolies and their economic domination and political power will promote among the broad masses awareness of the need for socialism."¹

In some bourgeois countries the proletariat, led by the Communist Parties, has taken a few steps towards establishing control over production.

In Austria workers' control is carried out by production councils. Their status is regulated by the Law of March 28, 1947, which empowers the councils to function in all fields of the economy, with the exception of agriculture and forestry.

The production council of an enterprise supervises the observance of social laws, collective agreements and labour contracts, controls pay, and takes part in establishing the vacation schedule. It manages cultural and communal institutions and funds, including those set up by the entrepreneur, possesses deliberative vote, and, in specially stipulated cases, the right of veto, particularly on questions of hire and dismissals. The internal rules of the enterprise can be changed only with the permission of these production councils.

They may demand monthly conferences with the proprietors on questions of management and organisation of production; they get copies of the balance sheets, including accounts of profits and losses, report on the economic position of their enterprises, the volume and assortment of output, and the lists of standing orders. The production councils of large enterprises, with 500 or more employees,

¹ *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969, Prague, 1969, p. 24.*

have the right to file protests with the state commission if their suggestions are ignored or if the economic management runs counter to public interests. The commission must take the relevant decision within four weeks of the filing of the protest.

The production councils, however, no longer exercise their rights to the extent they did in 1945-1946.

Assessing the law on production councils, the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of Austria pointed out that though the law restricted the rights of entrepreneurs, it nevertheless failed to provide the working people with the opportunity to take part in the solution of economic problems.¹ The law, however, has created certain initial prerequisites for the working people's struggle to win participation in the management of production.

The class struggle of the proletariat for democratic control over economic development is becoming more intense. The monopolies and the bourgeois governments stubbornly oppose the workers' attempts to obtain greater rights in the economic sphere because they are fully aware of the consequences.

However, nobody can turn back the march of history. The International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1969 noted that "in the course of anti-monopolist and anti-imperialist united action, favourable conditions are created for uniting all democratic trends into a political alliance capable of decisively limiting the role played by the monopolies in the economies of the countries concerned, of putting an end to the power of big capital and of bringing about such radical political and economic changes as would ensure the most favourable conditions for continuing the struggle for socialism".²

¹ *19. Parteitag der Kommunistischen Partei Österreichs (Gekürztes Protokoll), Wien, 1965, S. 363.*

² *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969, Prague, 1969, p. 27.*